

# ◆ From potsherds, to people: Sussex prehistoric pottery

COLLARED URNS TO POST DEVEREL-RIMBURY, c. 2000–500 BC

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*This article summarizes our knowledge of Sussex Bronze and Early Iron Age pottery traditions from c. 2000–500 cal. BC, along with the research issues, by which this knowledge of pottery is transformed into a knowledge of people. Written by an expert in the field, who has worked in both contract and research archaeology, its aim is to provide an easily accessible, up-to-date synthesis of practical use to both the would-be and the active pottery specialist. In so doing it introduces for the first time data on pottery from 20-odd unpublished Sussex assemblages, including that from the nationally known site of Shinewater Park.*

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

It is my hope that the following synthesis of Bronze and Early Iron Age pottery will supersede the excellent but now outdated Bronze Age syntheses of Reginald Musson (1954) and Ann Woodward (Ellison 1978; 1980), and Early Iron Age syntheses of Barry Cunliffe (1966; 1991), and provide, for Sussex, a practical counterpart to recent syntheses like Alex Gibson's *Prehistoric Pottery in Britain and Ireland*, in which he intended 'to raise some questions about the ceramic record and above all to remind ourselves that pots = people', but which is not 'a manual for would-be specialists' (Gibson 2002). As an experienced freelance pottery specialist and a British prehistorian, I too am interested in pottery and people. I want to communicate my knowledge of Sussex second- and early-first-millennium BC pottery, the method of study by which I achieved this, and how this understanding adds to our knowledge of the people who made and used it, but unlike Gibson, I believe this can only be achieved by giving the reader a *feel* of, and for, the pottery itself. Accordingly, what follows is like a manual. I do not tell the reader how to study pottery, there are good books on that already (e.g. Orton *et al.* 1993; PCRG 1991), but for the Sussex Bronze and Early Iron Ages, I outline what she or he needs to know in order to recognize and study it. After reading what follows, if the reader has not already, she or he will have an idea how to deal critically with an assemblage of Sussex Bronze Age and/or Early Iron Age pottery or a report on one. This would not be the case after reading Musson,

Woodward or Gibson — not for Sussex, or, for that matter, anywhere else in the country.

## METHODOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

### THE DATABASE

My sources are as follows. I am of course indebted to the published corpora of a host of previous researchers into Sussex prehistoric pottery, from the aforementioned Reginald Musson to more recent researchers like Rosamund Cleal (1982), Barry Cunliffe (1966; 1991), Sue Hamilton (1980; 1985; 1987; 1994; 1997a,b; 2001a,b; 2002a,b; 2004), Susan Morris (1978a,b), and Ann Woodward (Ellison 1972; 1980; 1982). Their work forms the nucleus of what follows. I have in addition personally analysed many prehistoric assemblages from the county and round about, including 20-odd significant Sussex second- and early-first-millennium BC assemblages which to this day remain un- or incompletely published, some generated by modern research excavations (the Caburn, Beddingham Villa and Selsey: Drewett & Hamilton 1999; Rudling 1998, 52; Seager Thomas 1998; 2001), some by antiquarian work (Fore Down, near Lullington, Glynde, and Wickbourne, Littlehampton: Budgen 1927; Burstow & Norris 1962; Gilkes 1993), but most the product of recent contract or developer-funded excavation (in East Sussex, Patcham Fawcett (I & II) and Shinewater Park, and in West Sussex, Angmering (the Roundstone Lane and Bypass sites), Birdham, Climping, Drayton, Durrington, Lavant (a methodologically challenging multi-period assemblage), Thundersbarrow Hill and

Worthing, etc.). Lastly, where they impact on our understanding of the Sussex database, I refer both to specific Bronze Age assemblages from outside the region and to influential national syntheses, which consider pottery typology and dating (Barrett 1980; Longworth 1985; Needham 1996).

PROBLEMS WITH THE ‘THREE AGE SYSTEM’

The principal second- and early-first-millennium BC pottery traditions represented in Sussex are *Beaker*, *Collared* and *Biconical Urns*, *Deverel-Rimbury* (hereafter DR) and *post Deverel-Rimbury* (hereafter PDR). We also have a handful of *Food Vessels* and *Pigmy Cups*. This paper considers the traditions from Collared Urns to PDR. The approximate order in which these traditions occurred through time is known, having been established with reasonable certainty through a combination of excavated stratigraphy, seriation (according to which assemblages that share features in common are deemed to be closer in date than assemblages without them), and radiocarbon dating. However, the Sussex database used here straddles a number of different traditions of interpretation and dating and both the names by which the different traditions have been called and the calendar and ‘Three Age System’ dates applied to them differ widely (Table 1). E. C. Curwen’s (1954) Late Bronze Age is the same as Ann Woodward’s Middle Bronze Age (Ellison 1972), Barry Cunliffe’s earliest Iron Age (1991), and Christopher Hawkes’s (1939) Late Bronze Age II/ Iron Age A1 more or less corresponds with John Barrett’s (1980) Late Bronze Age/ PDR,

and all of them belong to Richard Bradley and John Barrett’s (1980) later Bronze Age. This is not a problem in itself — a spade is a spade, whatever you call it. But for practising archaeologists who are neither ceramicists nor specialists in British later prehistory, it carries with it the danger that different periods are conflated, and with them their wider cultural associations. For example, to my not inconsiderable alarm, I have had recently to argue with a local archaeologist that you cannot draw a level chronological line between later Bronze Age Black Patch, Alciston, a late radiocarbon dated but otherwise classic DR settlement, and Late Bronze Age Shinewater Park, which has yielded one of the best closed PDR assemblages so far found in the county. The solution perhaps is to use the dates provided by radiocarbon, avoiding ‘Three Age System’ dates altogether, but this too is controversial, since it involves the use both of imprecise determinations — such as those from Black Patch — and of determinations from outside the region (e.g. Needham 1996). As for the names of pottery forms and traditions, for the present it looks as though we are stuck with them.

RESEARCH AGENDAS

More problematic still is how assemblages are interpreted, and why. Although we know the broad traditions into which Sussex second- and early-first-millennium BC pottery falls, the development of pottery through prehistory as a whole was not a continuum, and many forms and fabrics reoccurred. Spot-dating, where a specialist looks at

Table 1. Sussex Bronze and Early Iron Age pottery traditions and their dating.

Pottery tradition		Old ‘Three Age System’ dates	Old names		‘Three Age System’ dates — current	Calendar date (cal. bc)	
Beaker		N/A	N/A		Metal using Neolithic, EBA	c. 2600–1800	
Food Vessels		N/A	N/A		EBA	c. 2000–1700	
Collared Urn	Early	MBA	Overhanging rim	Primary series	EBA	c. 2000–1700	
	Middle			Secondary series		c. 2000–1500	
	Late						
Biconical Urn		MBA	N/A		EBA		
Deverel-Rimbury		LBA, LBA I	N/A		MBA	c. 1700–1150	
Post Deverel-Rimbury	Plain wares	LBA II	Hallstatt, Iron Age A1, Ultimate Deverel-Rimbury		LBA	later Bronze Age	c. 1150–950
	Developed plain wares	EIA, Early pre-Roman Iron Age (EPRIA)					c. 950–800
	Decorated wares		Iron Age A2, Caburn 1, Kimmeridge-Caburn	LBA– EIA	EPRIA	c. 800–500	



a sherd and ‘pronounces’ on its date (Orton *et al.* 1993, 54) is not an option. To get round this the specialist must look at a range of variables *together*, from the fabric and/or form of individual sherds, to the associations of assemblages as a whole, but even then, it is likely that many sherds will remain un- or only imprecisely dated. The same applies equally to the way the relationships between archaeological features and pottery finds are interpreted. For this reason most draft specialist pottery reports are hedged about with ‘coulds’, ‘buts’, ‘maybes’ and ‘ors’, and weaselly academic expressions like ‘*terminus post quem*’, in the case of a pottery report, a notional earliest date ascribed to a feature on the basis of its pottery associations rather than a date for the pottery itself. (The implication is that the pottery could be later.)

This recognition of doubt, where it exists, is integral to a proper understanding of all aspects of prehistory, including pottery analysis. The hedging of bets is not the problem. The problem arises later when the ceramicist’s elegant topiary is grubbed-up and replaced — as it often is — with an unyielding wall of certainty. Archaeology is after all a profession and there are many compelling reasons why a professional might prefer to call the proverbial spade by another name.

Take this example from a recently published report on the excavation of a Bronze Age site at Gatwick Airport. To start with, the pottery assemblage is attributed to an early phase of the PDR tradition, even though the published data clearly allow the possibility of a somewhat later date. The authors then go on:

Large conjoining sherds deposited within a number of shallow features ... are unlikely to represent incidental accumulation and may represent deliberate and selective deposition of material deriving from structured rubbish deposits, possibly within a votive context (Every & Mephram 2005, 56–7).

Well, maybe. Evidence for Bronze Age ritual involving the deliberate ‘placing’ of pottery and other everyday artefacts is now quite convincing, but it seems to me that the evidence from this site could be interpreted in a variety of ways, many of which have nothing at all to do with ritual. Academically, however, ritual is the context within which specialists must now work. I chose Gatwick as an example, not because it is particularly far-fetched, but because it is typical. Indeed, had my

own recent specialist reports on Sussex Bronze Age pottery seen the light of day, I might have been able to quote myself, although I would like to think that some of my natural equivocation would have got through to final publication.

## THE NAMING OF PARTS

In the following, the traditions into which Sussex second- and early-first-millennium BC pottery falls are discussed in chronological order. Under each tradition I start by summarizing the tradition’s principal characteristics, the changes that occurred in these, and their approximate calendar and relative dating. Alternative and superseded dates and terminologies are listed in Table 1 and key Sussex assemblages and useful published references to them in Tables 2–5. Attention thereafter is focused on the ceramic minutiae by which they, and any interpretatively useful deviations from them can be identified. I detail the forms, the fabrics and the decoration associated with each tradition and the morphology of assemblages comprising them, and using a combination of photographs, drawings and, where available, unpublished examples, attempt to convey to you the *feel* for the pottery to which I referred in my introduction. These, in addition, provide a limited ‘type series’ for Sussex second- and early-first-millennium BC pottery. (The illustrations are of real vessels, but the variability in Sussex second- and early-first-millennium BC pottery forms, and fabrics, means that they are not representative of the koine as a whole.) I also note any local pottery traditions with which they might be confused, and, in one or two instances, non-local traditions with which they have been associated elsewhere and with which they might one day be found in Sussex. Finally, and perhaps most interesting to the general archaeologist, I consider the various research issues that translate the study of Sussex second- and early-first-millennium BC pottery to people.

c. 2000–1500 cal. BC

## COLLARED URNS

### Dating

Collared Urns are divided into two or three apparently chronologically sequential groups: Ian Longworth’s (1984) Primary and Secondary Series Urns, and Colin Burgess (1986) and David

Tomalin's (1988, fig. 6) Early, Middle and Late Urns, both or all of which are represented in Sussex. Exact dating of Collared Urns is somewhat problematical. Radiocarbon places the tradition as a whole firmly *after* the floruit of Beakers and *before* that of DR, between c. 2000 cal. BC and c. 1500 cal. BC (Longworth 1984, 140; Needham 1996). The trouble is that there are not many dates, very few of these are precise, and, owing to the nature of the archaeological contexts from which most have been recovered, there are few good stratigraphic sequences. Doubtless, the different 'period' groups, the chronologies of which rest on the different chronological attribution of a number of recurring typological traits (Burgess 1986, 343–8), overlap, both with each other and with late Beaker and early DR traditions, but currently we do not know by how much.

The best Sussex evidence for the dating of Collared Urns comes from the West Heath barrow cemetery (Drewett 1985), where charcoal associated with a Secondary Series/ Late Urn recovered from a pit underlying barrow VI produced a radiocarbon date of 2140–1620 cal. BC, and charcoal from the barrow mound itself, dates of 1840–1500 and 1740–1410 cal. BC, providing a *terminus ante quem* for this vessel and for two other, different Secondary Series/Late Urns (one from the pit and one from the pre-barrow land surface). This evidence must be qualified, however, by the knowledge that the decorative traits employed in the county on 'early', 'middle' and 'late' Collared Urns are similar, by the use in a Primary Series/Middle to Late Urn from Westbourne of a flint-tempered fabric more usually associated with the DR tradition, and by a possibility, suggested to Sue Hamilton by the simultaneous burial by the Crowlink barrow of a range of different urns, that individual urns were stored prior to barrow construction (2001a, 62).

### Typology

Collared Urns are named for their pronounced, overhanging and often highly decorated collars. Five overlapping types can be distinguished in Sussex, three tri-partite and two bi-partite, which together form a typological continuum. All are collared, most are taller than they are broad, and most sit on narrow bases. Of the tripartite vessels, the first and 'earliest' is well represented by an open-mouthed vessel from Hangleton, East Sussex (Fig. 1). It has a narrow collar decorated internally and externally with horizontal twisted cord

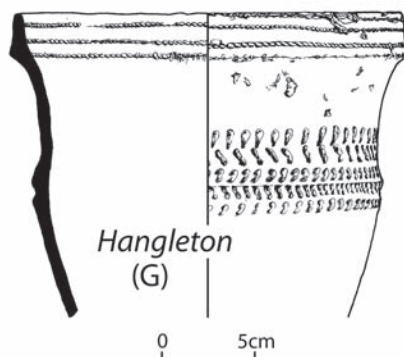


Fig. 1. 'Early' Collared Urn from Hangleton (after Drewett 1979. Drawing: Lysbeth Drewett).

impressions, a concave neck or cavetto below the collar, and a grooved shoulder decorated on, above and below, with short twisted cord impressions, which together form a herringbone pattern (see also Fig. 2.1). It corresponds to Longworth's Primary Series and Burgess' Early Urns. The second is similar but closed-mouthed, and lacks internal decoration and in most cases, the shoulder groove. It has occurred undecorated (Peacehaven); with horizontal twisted cord impressions on the collar, cavetto and below the shoulder, and vertical twisted cord impressions on the shoulder (Cliffe Hill); and with stabbed dots on the collar (Hassocks). One possible Sussex example has an internally bevelled rim (Westbourne) but this is unusual (Fig. 2.2). It corresponds to Longworth's Primary Series and Burgess' Middle Urns. The third, the classic Collared Urn, has a more pronounced and often concave collar, pinched out at the bottom so that in profile it resembles a Moai's nose, a shallow cavetto (Figs 2.3a & 2.5) or a flat or rounded shoulder (Figs 2.4 & 3.2), and — in most cases — an internally bevelled rim (Figs 2.3a, 2.4 & 3.3). It has occurred plain (Winterbourne) (Figs 2.4–5); with twisted cord impressions on the collar and rim bevel, the former often forming complex patterns (many sites) (Figs 2.3a & 3.2–3); with stabbed dots on the collar (large dots: Crowlink; small dots: Lower Tongdean); and with short twisted cord lines (Alfriston and Black Patch) (Fig. 3.2) or twisted cord horseshoes on the shoulder (Ladies Mile), and on the shoulder and in the cavetto (West Heath) (Figs 2.3a & b). It corresponds to Longworth's Secondary Series, Tomalin's Middle and Burgess' Late Urns. The fourth and fifth frequently resemble

Table 2. Sussex Collared Urns.

The principal sources for anyone interested in Sussex Collared Urns are Ian Longworth's (1984) *Collared Urns of the Bronze Age in Britain and Ireland* and Reginald Musson's (1952) *Illustrated Catalogue of Sussex Beaker and Bronze Age Pottery*, published in SAC 42, which illustrate most reconstructable Collared Urns found in Sussex prior to the late 1970s. The period groups given here follow Colin Burgess' (1986) revision of Longworth's original bipartite scheme. E = 'early'; M = 'middle'; L = 'late'. U = unclassifiable.

Site	Period group	<sup>14</sup> C dates	Reference
Alfriston	L	N	Ade 1849; Longworth 1984, pls 148, 188 & 229; Musson 1954, nos 220 & 230
Angmering	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 229
Apple Down	L	N	Raymond 1990
Valdo Wood, Goodwood	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 137
Balmer	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 131
Black Patch, Alciston	L	N	Ellison 1982a, 398–71; Holgate 1987
Blackpatch Hill	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 151; Musson 1954, no. 340; Pull 1932, 64
The Bostle	L	N	McKinley 2004, 38. fig. 4
Bow Hill	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 215; Musson 1954, no. 347
Burpham	U	N	Curwen & Curwen 1922, 16–17, pl. iii. 6
Caburn	L	N	Musson 1954, no. 345
Chanctonbury Hill	L	N	Drewett 1980, 169, fig. 11
Chichester	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 171; Musson 1954, no. 350
Clayton	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 146
Cliffe Hill, Lewes	M & L	N	Longworth 1984, pls 34 & 144; Musson 1954, nos 290 & 341; Spokes 1932
Climping	U	N	Seager Thomas unpub. (previously identified as Neolithic)
Crowlink	L	N	Hamilton 2001a, 60–61, fig. 12
Cuckoo Bottom, Lewes	L	N	Allen 2005, 41; Curwen 1954, pl. xv. 2 & 3; Longworth 1984, pls 149 & 161; Musson 1954, nos 300 & 360
Ditchling Field	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 141; Yeates 1960
Drayton	U	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Duncton Hill	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 131; Musson 1954, no. 343; Patchett 1938
Friday's Church, Barpham	L	N	Barr-Hamilton 1980; Longworth 1984, pl. 185
Green Street, Eastbourne	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 142; Musson 1954, no. 352
Hangleton	E	N	Drewett 1979, 248
Hassocks sand pit	M	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 42; Musson 1954, no. 270
Henfield	U	N	Longworth 1984, 276
Heyshott Down	L	N	Lewis 1960
Itford Hill, Beddingham	L	N	Curwen 1954, pl. xv. 1; Longworth 1984, pl. 187; Musson 1954, no. 363
Kemp Town, Brighton	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 160; Musson 1954, no. 310
Ladies Mile, Patcham	L	N	Holleyman & Yeates 1960; Longworth 1984, pl. 147
Lancing	L	N	Frere 1940, fig. 5; Longworth 1984, pls 155 & 220; Musson 1954, nos 354 & 370
Linchmere	E	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 20
Long Down	L	N	Drewett 1982, 59–61
Lower Tongdean, Hove	L	N	Norris 1937
Mount Harry, Lewes	L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 142; Musson 1954, no. 346
Offham Hill	U	N	Drewett 1977, 219–20
Oxtedde (or Oxsettle) Bottom, Lewes	L	N	Curwen 1954, 157, fig. 42; Longworth 1984, pl. 197; Musson 1954, no. 353
Peacehaven	?M	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 81
Slonk Hill, Shoreham	L	N	Hartridge 1978, fig. 16. 138, 147 & 149
Steyning Round Hill	L	N	Burstow 1958
Storrington	L	N	Dixon 1848; Lewis 1960; Musson 1954, no. 362
Telscombe Tye	L	N	Musson 1954, no. 351
Westbourne	M–L	N	Longworth 1984, pl. 56; Musson 1954, no. 361
West Heath	L	Y	Drewett 1985, 37–42, figs 23–4, m. 2–3
Westhampnett	U	N	Chadwick 2006, 26–7
Wickbourne, Littlehampton	L	N	Musson 1954, no. 344
Winterbourne, Lewes	L	N	Curwen 1954, pl. xv. 4 & 5; Longworth 1984, pl. 238; Musson 1954, nos 260 & 330

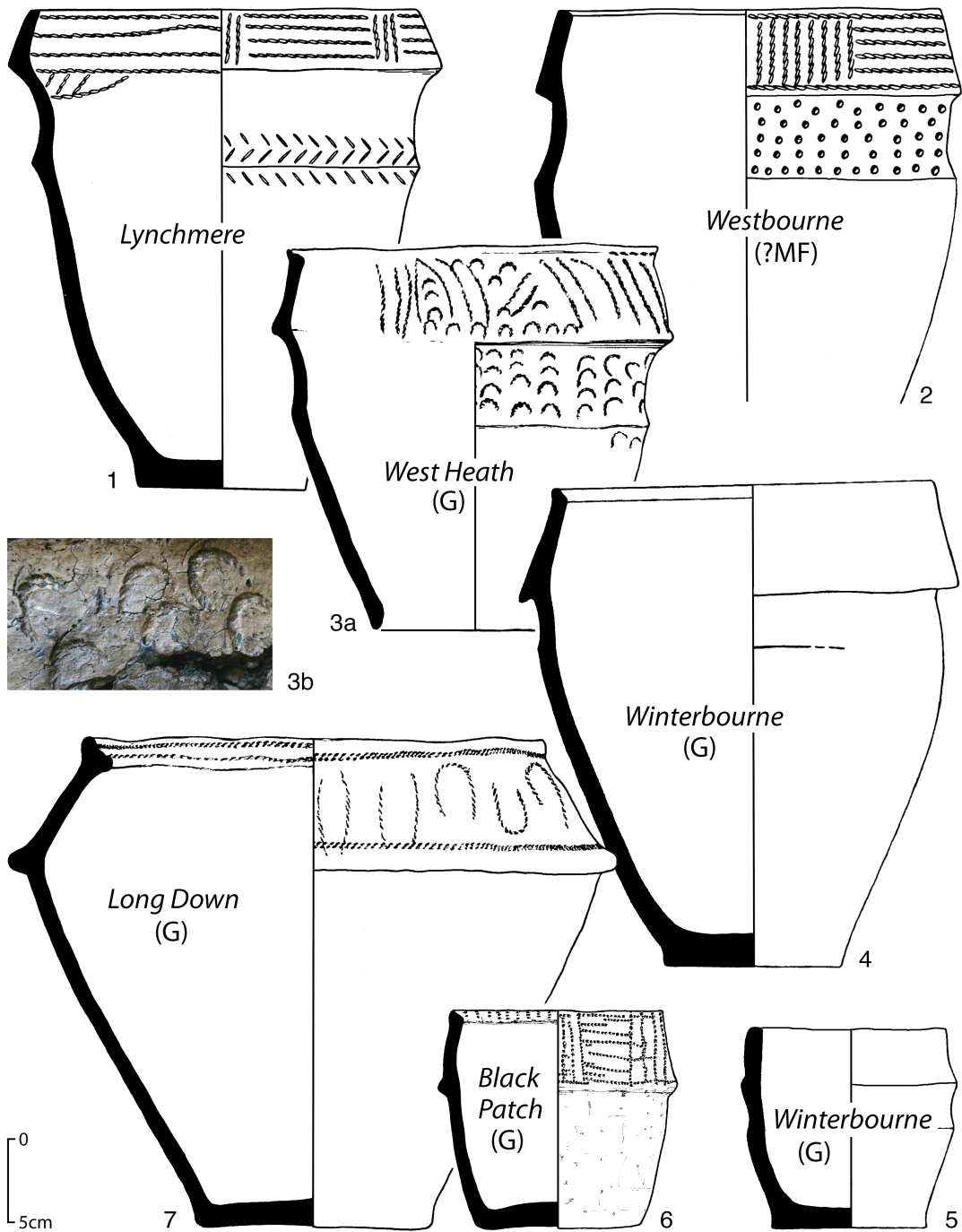


Figure 2. 'Early' (1), 'middle-late' (2) and 'late' Collared Urns (3–8). 1, after Longworth 1984; 2, 4 & 5, after Longworth 1984 & Musson 1954; 3a, 6 & 7, after Drewett 1982a & b and 1985 (drawings: Lysbeth Drewett; photo: author, with permission of Chichester District Museum). Key: G = grog-temper; MF = medium flint-temper.

this classic type but have neither a cavetto nor a shoulder below the collar, the collar and lower body instead forming an unbroken curve (Fig. 2.6 & 3.1) or a sharp angle (Fig. 2.7) (it is not always clear which). They too are decorated with twisted cord impressions, sometimes in complex patterns (Long Down and Ditchling Field) (Fig. 2.7), but do not of course have 'shoulder' decoration. Two unusually stumpy vessels have small, stabbed dots on the collar (Duncton Hill and Black Patch) (Figs 2.6 & 3.1). Both types correspond to Longworth's Secondary Series and Burgess' and Tomalin's Late Urns. All five types occur in a variety of sizes, including some which are very large indeed (e.g. Itford Hill), but in Sussex overall there is a distinct emphasis on the middle and lower size-range (Fig. 2).

### Technological features

'Most Early Bronze Age ceramics are characterized by soft soapy fabrics fired at low temperatures. Most fabrics contain sand which was probably present in the clays selected and the most common filling agent was grog [pre-fired clay], although calcined flint does occur occasionally in Collared Urn and Biconical fabrics' (Ellison 1980a, 33). This pretty well sums up Sussex Collared Urn fabrics. Beneath this broad wash, however, there is some variety. Individual pieces of grog, for example, while typically falling into the fine to medium size-range (1–4 mm), are occasionally much larger, and the grog fraction overall occurs both in different proportions and in different colours. Likewise flint, where present, tends to fall into the fine to medium (1–4 mm) rather than the coarse size-range (>4 mm), but it is sometimes much larger, and it may be the principal tempering agent or it may be rare (say <1% of the fabric). Shell also occurs (Fig. 3.2). (See fabric descriptions in Chadwick (2006), Raymond (1990) and Hamilton (2001a).) It is important, therefore, to view fabric and fabric inclusions as part of a wider technological whole.

The original surface finish of Collared Urns tends to be lumpy, where temper protrudes through or is close to the surface, but free of wipe marks, and sections through them commonly display an oxidized exterior, usually orange, but ranging from grey-buff to dark brown, and a dark grey unoxidized core (Plates 1.1–3). Several Sussex examples are visibly coil- or ring-built (e.g. Duncton Hill: Patchett 1938) and the fracture pattern of others is best explained in this way (e.g.

Black Patch) (Fig. 3.1). Vessel bodies can be quite thin, 8mm in the smaller of the two Black Patch urns, and are rarely thicker than 13 or 14mm, but both collars and bases are often very thick (e.g. Fig. 2.4). Obviously these are generalizations. The *feels* of the illustrated grog and shell-tempered vessels from Black Patch are very different, and there may be differences in colour and the depth of oxidization across vessels, depending on the precise conditions under which they were fired. But taken together, these features — in particular grog tempering, surface finish and collar thickness — are by themselves enough to distinguish the tradition, if not so much from contemporary wares, certainly from pottery belonging to earlier and later Sussex traditions.

### Research issues

Research interest on Collared Urns is currently focused on issues of human identity, social organization and pottery use. Ann Woodward has contrasted the limited size-range of Collared Urns with the much greater range associated with later prehistoric pottery traditions, stating that its 'commonest use... was to represent social status in funerary contexts', 'Pottery vessels functioned', she argues, '... in the sphere of [the] identification of the individual' (Woodward 1995, 200–1). In this she builds upon an earlier notion that they were specialized cinerary urns (Curwen 1954, 156; Burgess 1986, 341). Finds from domestic contexts, such as Suffolk's West Row Fen (Martin & Murphy 1988; Tomalin 1995, 102), however, demonstrate that the latter was not necessarily so.

So what *were* Collared Urns used for? Are we to apply Ann Woodward's rationale to a domestic context? I agree that the occasional interment of spectacularly large vessels of the sort found at Itford Hill, probably reflected or was intended to suggest a particular status; while the limited repertoire of Collared Urn potters, represented locally by Longworth's 'South East Style', and their apparent preference locally for small and medium over-large pots (Longworth 1984, fig. 33), militates in favour of, if not specialized funerary use, then the deliberate selection of vessels for funerary use, and/or specialized domestic use. Recent Sussex work has not added particularly to the resolution of these issues, but as an area that has been the subject of extensive developer-funded excavation in recent years, particularly on the Coastal Plain, it is notable



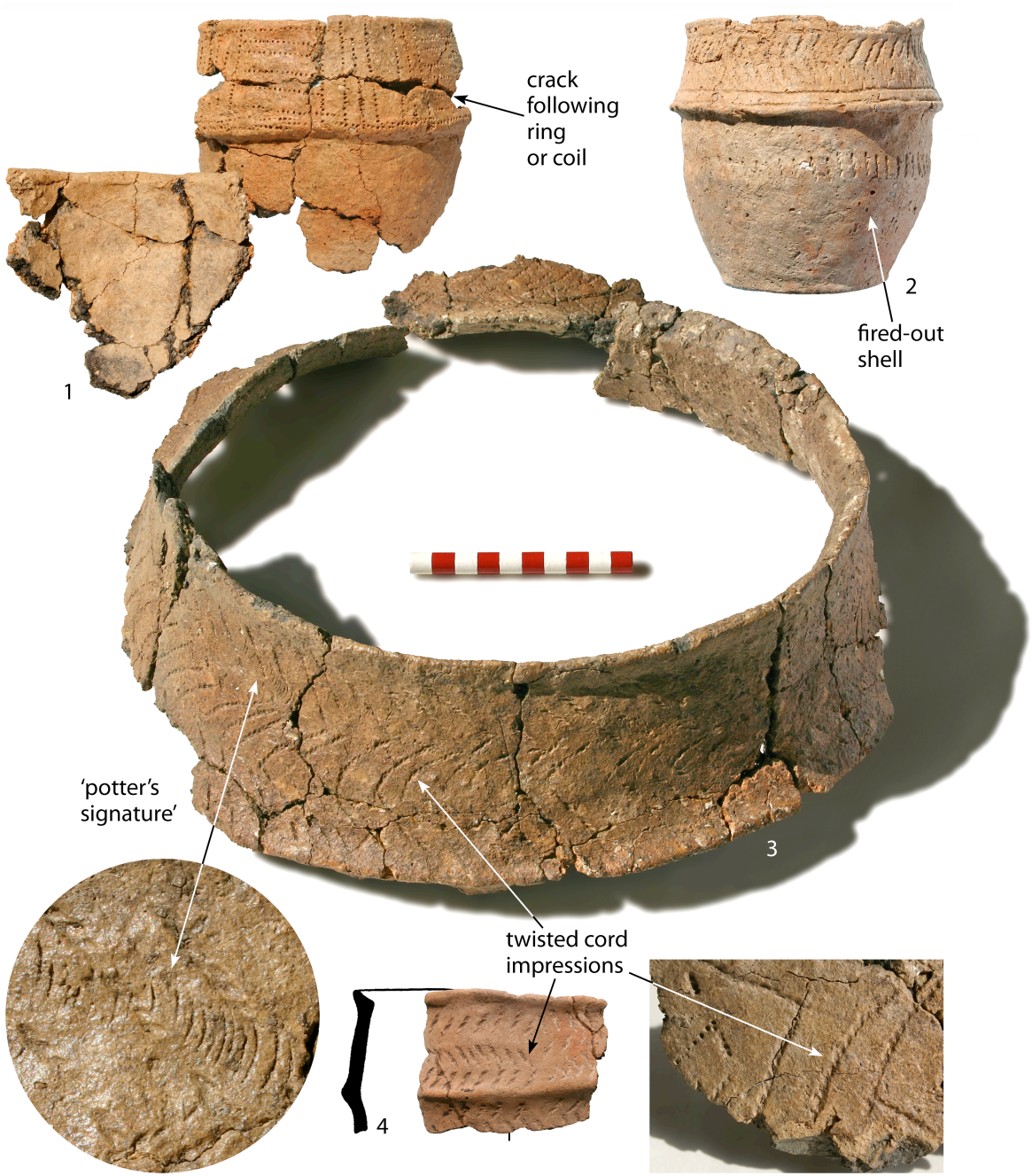


Fig. 3. 'Late' Collared Urns. 1 & 2, Black Patch; 3, Apple Down; 4, Chichester Cattle Market (photos: author, with permission of Barbican House & Chichester District Museums).

that the known distribution of Collared Urns has remained focused on the Downs, and in particular in funerary contexts on the Downs (Hamilton 2001a, 60) (Table 2). It follows, therefore, that the Bronze Age distribution of Collared Urns locally probably *did* focus on the Downs and that their use in the county *was* largely funerary.

At a more mundane level, the issue of the 'identity' of individual potters has been highlighted by Sue Hamilton's identification on the collar of an urn in the Crowlink assemblage of a group of fingernail impressions of a type elsewhere associated with individual potter's marks (2001, 60, fig. 12.9). (The urn from Apple Down has three or four such marks (Fig. 3.3, lower left). Could it be the work of more than one potter?)

Finally, 'Collared Urns,' as David Tomalin puts it 'were a final and convincing expression of a consistent insular ethnicity which once persisted throughout most, if not all, of the British Isles' (1995, 111). The tradition is widely distributed in both Britain and Ireland but, with the exception of a handful of vessels that roughly parallel it or were influenced by it from northwest France and the Netherlands, it is not present on the continent. This begs all sorts of questions: How, when and why did the tradition arise in the first place? How was it maintained? How and why did it end? All of these bear directly on the nature of contemporary society. Tomalin himself, for example, attributed its demise to the increased interaction of its creators with the outside world (1995, 111), a possibility recommended locally by the close affinity between vessels belonging to the next tradition considered here and some continental urns.

## BICONICAL URNS

### Dating

That Biconical Urns were being made at the same time as Collared Urns is clear, since they occur in the same fabrics, the same type of funerary contexts (sometimes the *same* funerary contexts), and, in Wessex and on the continent, were decorated in the same way, with fancy twisted cord impressions on the shoulder/collar. There are even overlapping radiocarbon dates: 1880–1527 cal. BC for a Kent urn (Cruse 2007, 153), 1861–1422 cal. BC for a domestic group from Brean Down, Somerset (Bell 1990) and a 1840–1410 cal. BC *terminus ante quem* for West Heath (Drewett 1985). Beyond this, however, dating is a bit of a struggle. Alex Gibson in his *Neolithic*

Table 3. Sussex Biconical Urns.

Site	<sup>14</sup> C dates	Reference
Alfriston	N	Ellison 1980, 33–4
Charmandean	N	Curwen 1954, pl. 19.3; Musson 1954, no. 390; Tomalin 1995, 106–8
Crowlink	N	Hamilton 2001, 61, figs 11 & 13
South Heighton	N	Musson 1954, no. 380
Lancing	N	Frere 1940, fig. 4b; Musson 1954, no. 491
Playden	N	Cleal 1982, 4
West Heath	Y	Drewett 1985, 40–41, fig. 23.1

and *Early Bronze Age Pottery* (1986), for example, showed Biconical Urns appearing later than and continuing after Collared Urns, but I cannot find any hard evidence for this. Nor am I convinced by David Tomalin, who has distinguished *early* stone-tempered 'Inception Series' urns, which he views as a continental intrusion, from *later* grog-tempered 'form 3' urns, which he views as a local adaptation of 'Inception Series' urns (1988, 241, fig. 60). I do not dispute the identification of the two different wares. Moreover, the introduction of a foreign vessel type late during the period when Collared Urns were being made and used would be consistent with Tomalin's explanation for the latter's disappearance. But the same logic argued from a Sussex perspective, where stone (flint) tempering is characteristic of later Bronze Age traditions, and grog tempering of earlier Bronze Age traditions (Beaker pottery and Food Vessels), would reverse Tomalin's sequence (cf. Collared Urns, above). For the moment, therefore, it is probably safer to leave them as a group hanging between c. 2000 cal. BC and c. 1500 cal. BC, the approximate period covered by the Collared Urn.

### Typology and technology

In Sussex the Biconical Urn is very much a minority style, with fewer than ten examples so far recognized. Seven of these are illustrated in Figure 6. For the most part fabrics and finish are identical to those of Sussex Collared Urns (e.g. Crowlink, fabric G1: Hamilton 2001a, 52), although it should be noted that the best-preserved Sussex example, the Charmandean Road urn, on display in Worthing Museum (Fig. 4.4), is flint-tempered and has a rough surface finish reminiscent of coarse DR pottery, with

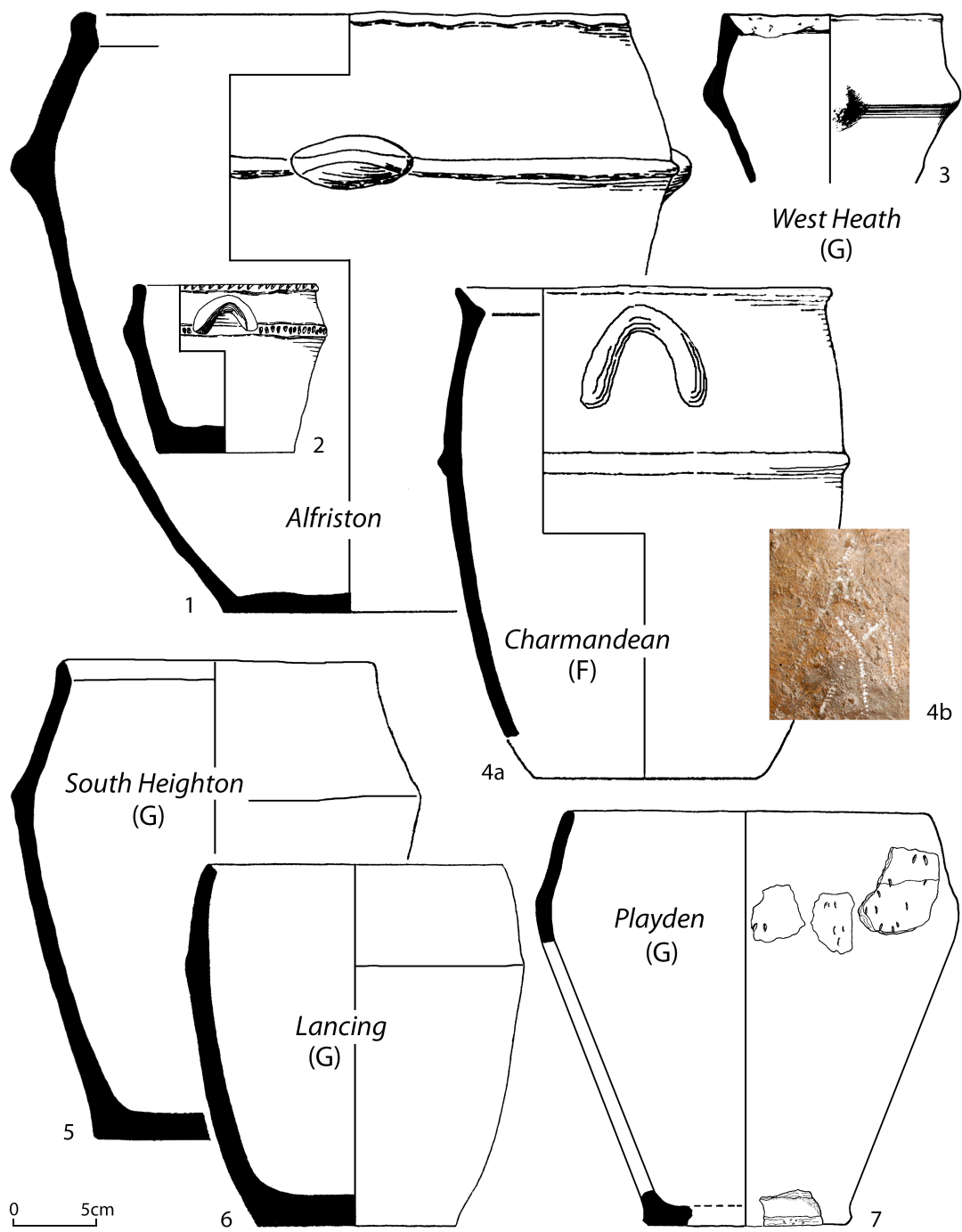


Fig. 4. Biconical Urns. 1 & 2, after Ellison 1980; 3 after Drewett 1985 (drawing: Lysbeth Drewett); 4a, after Musson 1954 & Tomalin 1995 (photo: Lisa Fisher, with permission of Worthing Museum); 5 & 6, after Musson 1954; 7 after Cleal 1982). Key: G = grog-temper; F = flint-temper.

which Sussex Biconical Urns were formerly grouped (e.g. in Curwen 1954; Musson 1954).

### Research issues

Many of the issues discussed for Sussex Collared Urns apply equally to Biconical Urns. For example, their functional distribution locally is the same as that of Collared Urns, wholly funerary, but elsewhere in Britain includes settlements, such as Dartmoor's Shaugh Moor (Wainwright & Smith 1980), Somerset's Brean Down (Bell 1990), Oxfordshire's Yarnton (Gill Hey pers. comm.) and Suffolk's West Row Fen (Tomalin 1995). This has led some to believe that the Biconical Urn is the Collared Urn's domestic counterpart. But as with Collared Urns, Sussex does not fit. The county has also yielded one of the best 'potters marks', a fine dot-impressed ideogram on the shoulder of the Charmandean urn (Fig. 4.4b). Where Biconical Urns differ is in their wide distribution on the continent, in both the Dutch Hilversum (ancient) and the French Eramécourt pottery traditions. Of particular note is the distribution of 'horseshoe'-shaped handles (Burgess 1987, fig. 2), seen in Sussex at Alfriston and Charmandean (Figs 4.2 & 4.4), a specific *decorative* parallel for the Playden jar in Biconical Urns from Holland (Ten Anscher 1990) (Fig. 4.7), the use in Wessex and on the continent of twisted cord decoration (e.g. Bostyn *et al.* 2000, figs 16–18), and, of course, the biconical form itself. Discussion of this has revolved around the nature of the connection between the two (people or goods), the time at which it occurred, the direction of influence, and the implications of this for dating (considerable). In David Tomalin's view, the direction of influence was from the continent to Britain; most continental workers believe it to have been the other way round (e.g. Blanchet 1984, 212). Either way, however, it challenges the impression given by Collared Urns of a ceramically insular Britain.

c. 1700–1150 cal. BC

### DEVEREL-RIMBURY (DR)

#### Dating

Overall, radiocarbon evidence suggests that the DR pottery tradition began between 1700 and 1500 cal. BC and ended around 1150 cal. BC (Needham 1996, 132–5). A minority of dates, including some from Sussex, however, suggest a currency extending up to or even beyond the end of the second

millennium BC, a period associated both locally and elsewhere with its typological successor, the PDR pottery tradition. As we will see, there is evidence for overlap between some aspects of the two traditions. But given that the cultural associations of two traditions (metalwork, settlement type, loomweights, etc.) are mostly distinct from each other, the several hundred years implied by the dates seem too long. I agree wholeheartedly with Stuart Needham, when he says of late-dated DR Black Patch, Alciston:

It would seem that poor precision in the radiocarbon measurements ... gives unexpectedly broad ranges. The three central dates for house 1 span 230 radiocarbon years, whilst three for house 3 span 240 radiocarbon years, longer than might be expected even accepting some time depth to the use of the hut platforms (Needham 1996, 135).

A list of radiocarbon dates from Sussex DR settlements, including Black Patch, can be found at the end of Sue Hamilton's conference paper *Sussex not Wessex* (Hamilton 2003, 83) and there are further dates from Wessex Archaeology's excavations on the Westhampnett cremation cemetery (Chadwick 2006, 29).

#### Typology

The DR pottery tradition differs from all the earlier pottery traditions discussed here in that individual assemblages comprise a greater range of vessel type and vessel size, utilize a wider range of fabrics, and incorporate different impressed and more applied 'decoration' (Figs 5–7). Ann Woodward has responded to this diversity by dividing up the tradition as a whole into 'fine', 'heavy-duty' and 'everyday' wares (Ellison 1980a; 1981), and it is into these groups that most Sussex assemblages are now sorted, the point being that within it, fine, medium and coarse fabrics do not *necessarily* equate with small, medium and large pots.

A dozen or so *overlapping* forms are recurrent in Sussex assemblages. (Whilst individual vessel types can be distinguished (Ellison 1978, fig. 15), it needs to be emphasized that there are no sharp divisions between them.) Best known are the tradition's large, thick-bodied bucket and barrel-shaped urns, Woodward's 'heavy-duty' wares, which occur undecorated (Mile Oak), with plain applied cordons (Amberley Mount, Patcham-Fawcett) (Fig. 5.1), fingertip-impressed applied cordons



Table 4. Sussex Deverel-Rimbury (DR).

The principal published sources for Sussex Deverel-Rimbury pottery are Musson's (1954) catalogue, Ann Woodward's synthesis *The Bronze Age of Sussex*, which provides a rough type series (Ellison 1978, 32–4), and her *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society* 48 report on the pottery from Black Patch, which sets out her scheme of use categories for the county (Ellison 1982, 362). Deverel-Rimbury pottery cannot currently be sub-divided chronologically.

Site	<sup>14</sup> C dates	Reference
Amberley Mount	N	Ratcliffe-Densham, H.B.A. & M.M. 1966
Angmering Bypass	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Black Patch, Alciston	Y	Ellison 1982; R.Q. Tapper in prep.
Blackpatch	N	Ratcliffe-Densham, H.B.A. & M.M. 1953
Brighton	N	Musson 1954, nos 400–401
Climping	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Cock Hill	N	Ratcliffe-Densham, H.B.A. & M.M. 1961
Crapham Down, Eastbourne	N	Musson 1954, no. 420
Cuckoo Bottom, Lewes	N	Anon. 1888; Musson 1954, no. 404
Downsview, Brighton	Y	Hamilton 2002a
Drayton	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Durrington Centenary House	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Findon	N	Lewis 1960, 18 & fig. 2.3
Goring	N	Musson 1954, no. 406
Hassocks	N	Musson 1954, no. 421
Haywards Heath	N	Curwen 1954, pl. xix. 4; Musson 1954, no. 405
Highdown	N	Wilson 1940, fig. 1
Itford Hill (barrow)	N	Ellison 1972
Itford Hill (settlement)	N	Burstow & Holleyman 1957
Kingston Buci	N	Curwen & Hawkes 1931, pl. 1.2
Lancing	N	Frere 1940, fig. 6b
Littlehampton golf course	N	Unpub.
Mile Oak	Y	Hamilton 2002b
New Barn Down	N	Curwen 1934
Oving	N	Watson 2000
Park Brow	N	Musson 1954, no. 402; Wolseley <i>et al.</i> 1927
Patcham-Fawcett	N	Hamilton unpub.
Playden	N	Cleal 1982
Plumpton Plain A	N	Hawkes 1935
Roundstone Lane, Angmering	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Seaford	N	Gerard Smith 1939, fig. 1
Selsey	N	Kenny 1989; Musson 1954, nos 407 & 422–3
Steyning Round Hill	N	Burstow 1958
Teg Down, Patcham	N	Curwen 1937; Musson 1954, no. 403
Varley Halls, Brighton	Y	Hamilton 1997a
Westhampton	Y	Avery & Mepharm 2006
Wickbourne, Littlehampton	N	Gilkes 1992, fig. 3.2
Yapton	N	Lewis 1960, 17 & fig. 2.1

(Littlehampton, Varley Halls and Westhampton) (Figs 5.4, 6.11, 7.1 & 7.4–5 & Plate 1.8) and fingertip-impressed cordons (Angmering Bypass, New Barn Down). Less widely known, but no less characteristic of the tradition are Woodward's 'everyday' wares, smaller straight- or convex-sided jars, some scaled down versions of bucket or barrel urns, some with bodies as coarse and thick as bucket and barrel urns, which *grade* down into

small, chunky, bag-shaped vessels. These too may have an applied cordon (Roundstone Lane) (Fig. 5.2) or cincture of fingertip impressions (Amberley Mount, Itford Hill) (Figs 5.3, 6.10 & 6.13), but more typically they are plain (Angmering Bypass) (Fig. 7.3) or have round or oval bosses (Itford Hill etc.) (Figs 5.5–7 & 6.14), sometimes perforated horizontally (Plumpton Plain, Steyning Round Hill and Itford Hill) (Fig. 5.8). All of these have



highly variable height to width ratios. Last, are Woodward's 'fine' wares, classically represented by a near whole globular jar from the Itford Hill cemetery barrow, decorated on the shoulder with a tool-impressed band, comprising three rows of diagonal and vertical strokes (Figs 6.16 & 7.6). 'Fine' here applies not to fabric (*contra* Every & Mephm 2006, 27), but to a wider set of traits, which may, but does not necessarily, include a fine fabric. (The Itford Hill bowl, which is in a medium to coarse flint-tempered fabric, is a case in point) (see Fig. 7.6).

Other decorative/morphological features to look out for include fingertip-impressed 'horseshoes', a form widely associated with Essex's Ardleigh tradition, but clearly a Sussex trait as well (Amberley Mount, Downsview and Patcham-Fawcett) (Fig. 7.2), fingertip-impressed, plain squared and plain rounded rims (most sites), perforations below the rim (Plumpton Plain), fingertip impressions on the edge of, or below, the rim (Angmering Bypass, Drayton, Varley Halls, Westhampnett) (Figs 7.4–5), bossed cordons (plain cordon: Black Patch and Roundstone Lane; fingertip-impressed cordon: Oving, Westhampnett and Yapton) (Figs 5.2 & 7.5), a concave shoulder above the cordon (Roundstone Lane, New Barn Down) (Fig. 6.15) and comb/dot impressions (Durrington, Findon, Park Brow and Westhampnett) (Figs 6.12 & 7.5). Individually some of these traits overlap with earlier or later traditions but analogies with more complete vessels, both from Sussex and outside the region, show most to derive from variants of the foregoing forms, while in combination they are very much diagnostic of both local and regional DR traditions.

### Technological features

All Sussex DR pottery is flint-tempered, usually densely (Plates 1.4–10), and in East Sussex it may incorporate grog (e.g. Black Patch, house 1) (Plate 1.7). Temper in individual fabrics tends to be poorly sorted. Countywide we see a continuum from fine to very coarse wares, but on most sites sherds can be sorted into a limited range of fine (dominated by inclusions of 1 mm or less) (Plate 1.10), medium (up to 4 mm), medium to coarse (3–5 mm) (Plates 1.6 & 1.8–9), coarse (c. 5 mm) (Plates 1.4–5) and very coarse wares (frequent inclusions 6–8 mm), with most sherds falling into the medium to coarse and coarse fabric range. However, single vessels have occasionally been shown to comprise more

than one fabric, in some cases because of the use of different clay mixes, in others because of the poor mixing of clays in the first place. (The rim of the illustrated convex-sided jar from Angmering Bypass is in a medium fabric, its body is in a coarse to very coarse fabric) (Fig. 7.3). This emphasizes Ann Woodward's observation that in Sussex there is not necessarily a correspondence between her use categories and fabric type (Ellison 1980a, 34). Nor is there any consistent correspondence between fabric type and body sherd thickness, which ranges from as little as 5 mm to as much as 20 mm.

Like Collared Urns, DR pottery locally was fired at low temperatures and on excavation can be mud-like,<sup>2</sup> and when dry, very friable indeed. (As I write I have on my desk beside me a spread of filthy gravel from the aforementioned Angmering convex-sided jar.) Owing to their flint-temper, even unweathered fine wares have a rough feel, and this is exacerbated by coarse fingered and finger-smeared finishes on 'everyday' and 'heavy-duty' wares. Similarly, the firing of DR pottery is uneven. Most vessels have an unoxidized core and a few have uniformly oxidized or unoxidized exteriors, but usually their finish is blotchy, a by-product of open firing curiously absent from many Collared Urns. This seems, and I think is, casual, the first signs of a truly functional pottery-making tradition, further evidence of which can be seen in the repair of cracked vessels using paired 'rivet' holes and the re-use of these in funerary contexts such as the Itford Hill cemetery barrow (Ellison 1972, 111–2) (Fig. 5.3). There is also evidence for ring or coil building. In the convex-sided jar from Angmering Bypass there is, for example, a sharp diagonal line between the two fabrics, the coarser fabric a centimetre or more higher on the outside than on the inside. Similarly, rills running from top to bottom of the Littlehampton jar were probably formed when the rings or coils were smoothed over (cf. Mile Oak: Hamilton 2002a, 48) (Fig. 7.1).

### Research issues

Whereas most Collared Urns come from funerary contexts, significant quantities of DR pottery have been recovered from settlement *and* funerary contexts, and accordingly research interest, while continuing to focus on issues of pottery use, human identity and social organization, has had a slightly different emphasis, exemplified by Ann Woodward's resolution of DR pottery into the three

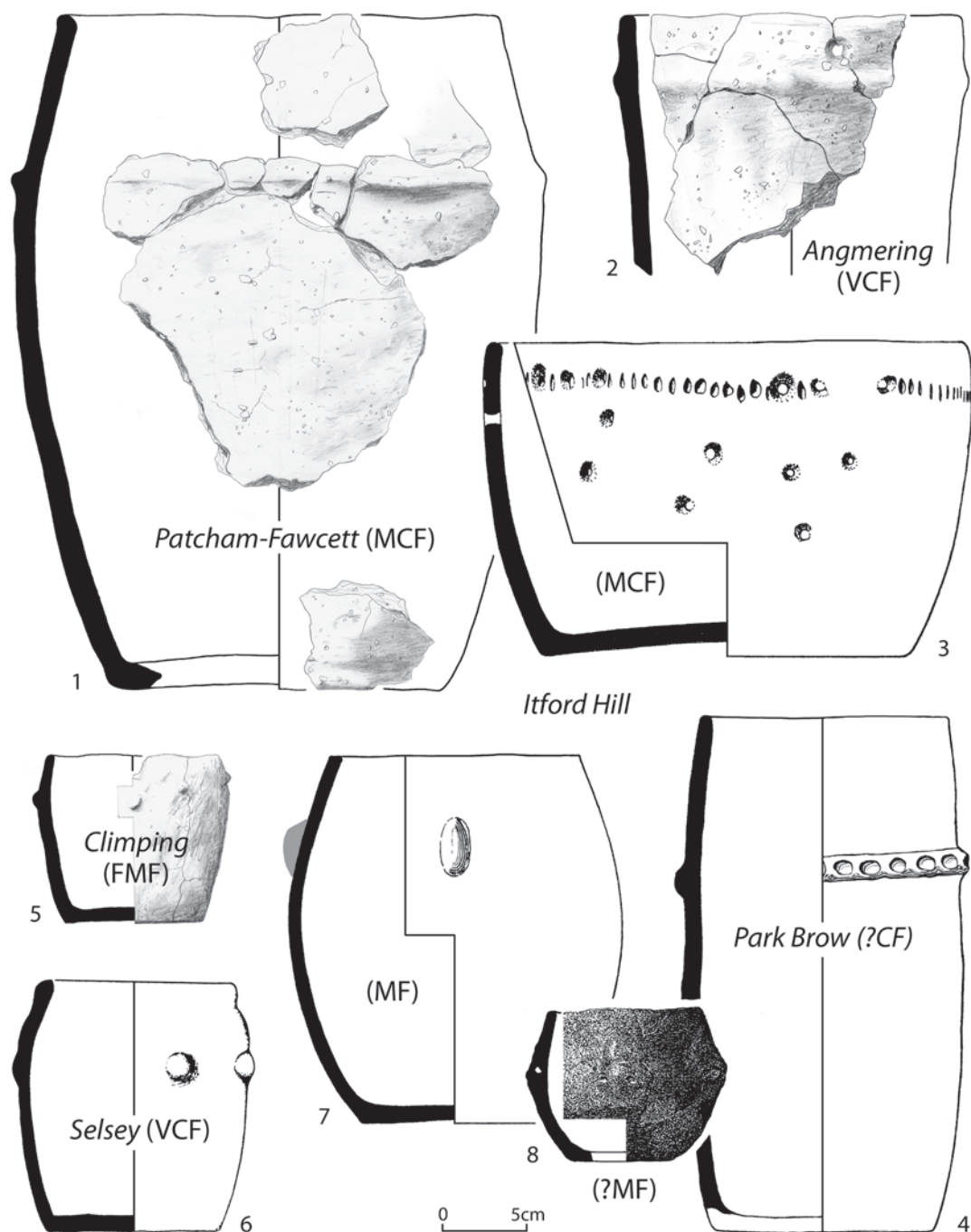


Fig. 5. Deverel-Rimbury. 1, 2 & 5, previously unpublished; 3 & 7, after Ellison 1972; 4, after Curwen 1954 & Wolseley *et al.* 1927; 6, after Kenny 1989; 8, after Burstow & Holleyman 1957. Key: VCF = very coarse flint-temper; CF = coarse flint-temper; MCF = medium to coarse flint-temper; MF = medium flint-temper; FMF = fine to medium flint-temper.

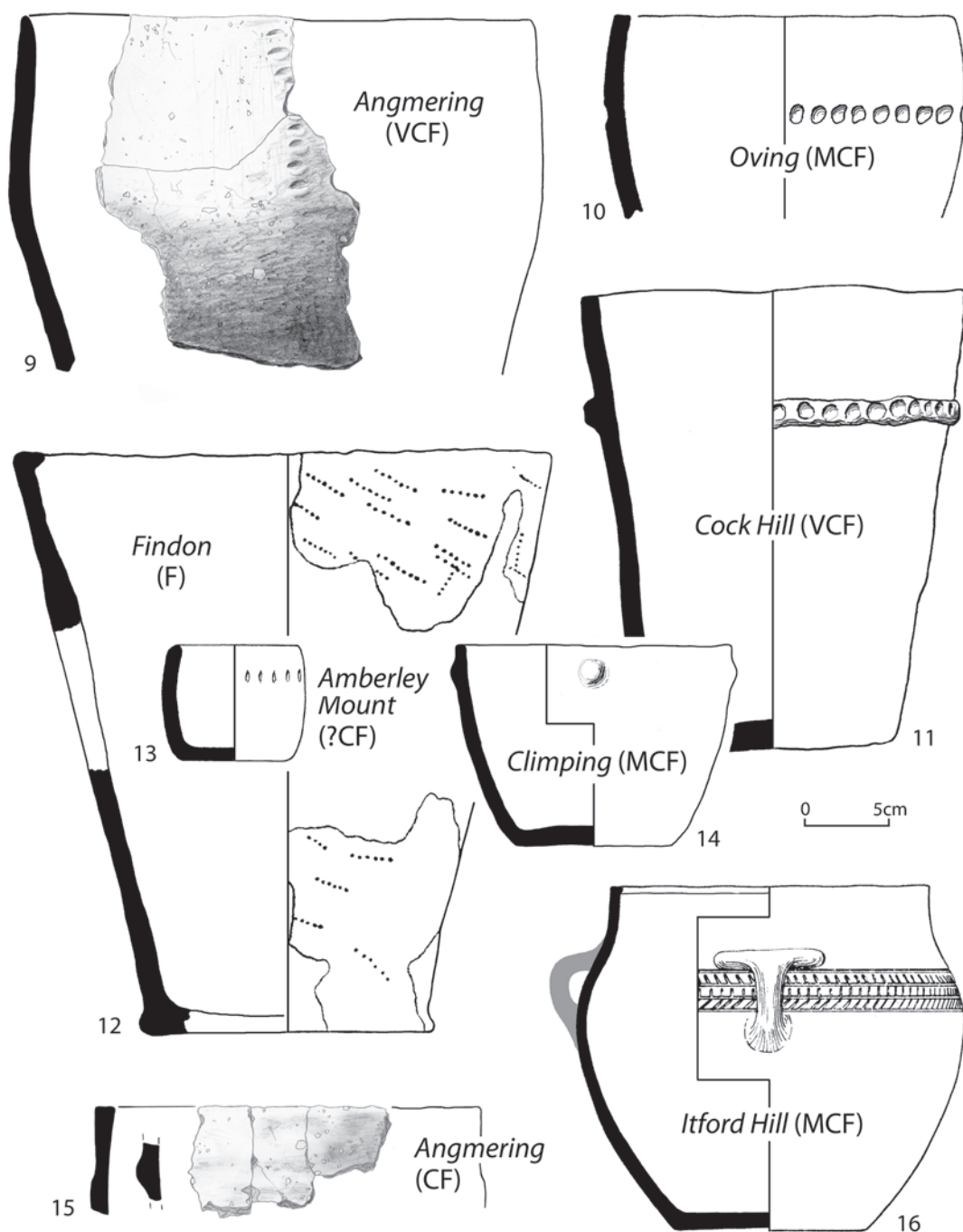


Fig. 6. Deverel-Rimbury. 9, 14 & 15, previously unpublished; 10, after Watson 2000; 11 & 13, after Ratcliffe-Densham, H.B.A. & M.M. 1961 & 1966; 12, after Lewis 1960; 16, after Ellison 1972. Key as for Fig. 5.





Plate 1. Collared Urn (1–3) and Deverel-Rimbury fabrics (4–10). 1, Burpham; 2, Apple Down (Fig. 3.3); 3, Black Patch (Figs 2.6 & 3.1); 4, Angmering Bypass (Fig. 7.3); 5, 7 & 9, Black Patch; 6, Patcham-Fawcett (Fig. 5.1); 8, Angmering Bypass; 10, Plumpton Plain. Key: G = grog-temper; CF = coarse flint-temper; MCF = medium to coarse flint-temper; MCFG = grog and medium to coarse flint-temper; FF = fine flint-temper. Scale 1.5:1.





Plate 2. Post Deverel-Rimbury plain ware (11 & 13), developed plain ware (12 & 14–18) and decorated ware fabrics (19–21). 11, Beddingham (Figs 8.7 & 11.1); 12, 14 & 17, Shinewater Park (Figs 11.6, 11.5 & 9.30); 13, Kingston Buci (Fig. 8.2); 15 & 16, Selsey (Figs 9.21 & 11.9); 18–19, Newhaven; 20, the Trundle; 21, the Caburn (Fig. 11.12). Key: MCF = medium to coarse flint-temper; MF = medium flint-temper; FMF = fine to medium flint-temper; FF = fine flint-temper; FQ = fine quartz sand; RMFS = shell and rare medium flint-temper; SI = shell-temper with pisolithic iron oxide/ glauconite inclusions; GS = greensand and ?grog-temper; I = pisolithic iron oxide/glauconite inclusions. Scale 1.5:1.



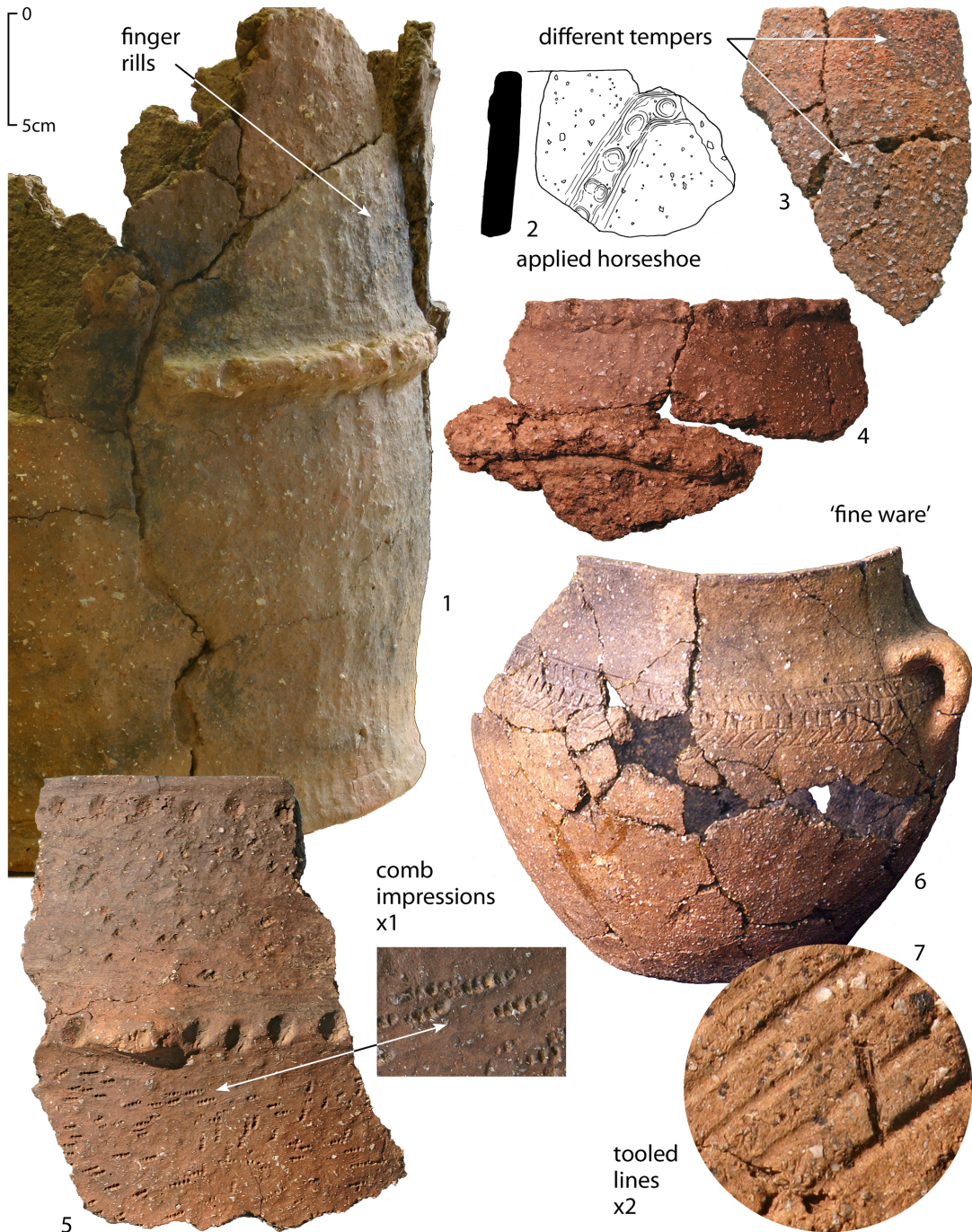


Fig. 7. Deverel-Rimbury. 1, Littlehampton Golf Course; 2, Patcham-Fawcett 1; 3, Angmering Bypass; 4, Drayton; 5, Westthampnett; 6, Itford Hill; 7, Black Patch (drawing: Jane Russell; photos: author, 1, 5, 6 & 7 with permission of Barbican House, Littlehampton & Chichester District Museums).

functional categories outlined above and her use of these in influential analyses of both types of contexts.

Three important points emerge from this. Firstly, DR cemeteries comprise, or are seen to comprise, discrete family-like units or clusters, which can be equated with the small domestic-sized units known from settlement excavations (e.g. on Sussex's Itford Hill: Ellison 1980b, 122). Secondly, individual houses may yield different proportions of 'fine', 'everyday' and 'heavy-duty' wares, the association of which with other features and artefact types can suggest house use. ('Major residential' and 'ancillary' structures were distinguished by Woodward at Cock Hill, Itford Hill and Plumpton Plain (Ellison 1980a, 36–8; 1981, 419), for example, and are postulated for Black Patch and Mile Oak (Russell 1996; 2002, 79). The Black Patch identifications, however, are complicated by the identification of lipid residues suggestive of milk use on pottery from both 'major residential' and 'ancillary' structures from the site and by my analysis of its stone finds (Copley *et al.* 2005, 515–16; Seager Thomas 1999, 43–5). Thirdly, the proportions of different functional categories present on settlement and cemetery sites differ, the former yielding mostly 'everyday' wares, the latter similar proportions of all three, suggesting once again the deliberate selection of particular vessels for burial (Woodward 1995, 199).

More widely, later Bronze Age social organization is reflected in the distribution of the DR tradition as a whole, and the resolution within it of typologically discrete regional groups. Its pottery occurs across southeast Britain, in France (e.g. Rouex: Desfossés *et al.* 2000) and in Belgium (e.g. Braffe: Henton & Demarez 2005). Within this area, however, there are minor typological differences and a lot of effort has been expended in trying to sort these into definable regional sub-styles, which may reflect distinct local populations, and in trying to identify any non-local influences on these. Ann Woodward, for example, writes of a Sussex sub-style (Ellison 1978, 32–4), and it is widely believed that this was influenced by or had connections with East Anglia's Ardleigh tradition (e.g. Hamilton 2002a, 48–9; Every & Mephram 2006, 29). With every new find, however, the Sussex sub-style becomes less plausible, so-called outside influence is shown to be integral to the Sussex potter's repertoire, and Sussex itself shown to be more fully a part of a pan-regional tradition.

In Sussex only its 'fine' wares (Figs 7.6–7) and a type of globular vessel with horizontally pierced lugs (Fig. 5.8), now stand out as regionally distinct.

Lastly, much recent research on DR settlement and other sites suggests that the use and deposition of everyday objects on them, including pottery, were not always strictly functional: 'The lifecycle of the settlement', as Joanna Brück puts it, 'was not only related to that of its occupants in practical terms; each was also a symbolic representation of the other' (Brück 1999, 145; see also Brück 2001 & 2006). This might explain some of the 'odder' DR finds from the county — pots filled with burnt stones found at Littlehampton, Oving and Westhampnett (Seager Thomas unpub.) (Fig. 7.1); a complete urn cut into the chalk outside one of the houses at Patcham-Fawcett (Fig. 5.1); and vessels that appear to have been deposited whole from areas of the county apparently lacking in settlement-type assemblages (Climping, Hassocks, Hayward's Heath, Selsey, Yapton) (Figs 5.5–6). If we buy into this, however, and most British prehistorians do, we must face up to its implications for the functional approach to the study of pottery distribution practised by Ann Woodward and her disciples. It is possible that their distributions are not quite what they seem.

#### TREVISKER WARE

It is probably only a matter of time before Trevisker Ware, DR's West Country equivalent, turns up in Sussex, for it has now been identified in Kent, on the Isle of Wight and in France. Radiocarbon evidence indicates that the tradition appeared before DR, and it has been suggested, less convincingly, that it continues later (Parker Pearson 1990, 6; Quinnell 1998, 25). A typical vessel is barrel-shaped with an out-turned, internally bevelled rim, below which it is decorated with cord-impressed or incised chevrons or zigzags. Perforated lugs/ bosses are also common (ApSimon & Greenfield 1972, figs 14–19; Gibson 2002, pl. 18; Woodward & Cane 1991, figs 40–51). For us though, Trevisker Ware's principal distinguishing characteristic is its fabric, classically gabbroic, and utterly different from anything currently known from the Sussex Bronze Age, with visible inclusions of white felspar and/ or other West Country rock fragments. (The Kent vessel was described by Nigel Macpherson Grant (1994, 65) as 'a hard-fired compact ware containing fairly profuse grits of angular black stone.')

Table 5. Sussex post Deverel-Rimbury (PDR).

Sussex post Deverel-Rimbury traditions as such first appear in Barrett 1980, 311–12. For the Bronze Age there is no published Sussex synthesis — its identification as a distinct tradition, post-dates Woodward’s Sussex work — but the development and importance of the tradition is well covered in Sue Hamilton’s later specialist reports (1987; 1997a,b; 2001b; 2002a,b; 2004 etc.). Its final phase is summarized in Barry Cunliffe’s SAC 104 report on the pottery from Stoke Clump (1966) and his *Iron Age Communities in Britain* (1991, 66 & fig. A.3). The period groups given here follow Stuart Needham’s revision of Barrett’s original bipartite scheme. PW = plain ware; DEV = developed plain ware; DEC = decorated ware. GEN = generic PDR pottery (all the assemblages listed under a particular incorporate generic PDR pottery as well).

Site	Period group	<sup>14</sup> C dates	Reference
Angmering Bypass	DEV	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Ashington	GEN	N	Hamilton 1994
Beddingham Roman villa	PW/ DEV–DEC	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Birdham	PW–DEV	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Bishopstone	DEV	N	Hamilton 1977
Black Patch, Alciston	DEV–DEC	N	Tapper in prep
Caburn	DEC	N	Curwen & Curwen 1927; Hawkes 1939a, figs a–e & l. 26–8; Hamilton in prep.; Wilson 1938, figs 13.4–7 & 14.1, 3, 8–9
Chanctonbury Ring	DEC	N	Hamilton 1980; 2001b
Climping	PW	Y	Seager Thomas unpub.
Downsview, Brighton	GEN	Y	Hamilton 2002a
Durrington Centenary House	PW	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
East Beach, Selsey	DEC	N	Kenny 1989; Seager Thomas 2001, 36–8
Eastbourne	DEV	N	Musson 1954, no. 540

c. 1150–500 cal. BC

POST DEVEREL-RIMBURY (PDR)

Dating

PDR pottery from much of southeast England, including Sussex, can be divided into three overlapping but broadly sequential typological groups: plain wares, developed plain wares and decorated wares (Figs 8–11), the character and sequence of which have been reliably established by finds from discrete deposits that comprise pottery belonging to one or other of the three groups only (Selsey), finds belonging to different groups from stratigraphically sequential deposits (notably at Potterne in Wiltshire and Ram’s Hill in Berkshire, where decorated wares overlay plain wares, and Runnymede Bridge, on the Surrey/Berkshire border, where the upper levels contained more developed plain wares/decorated wares than the lower levels) and by radiocarbon dating. Plain wares are currently dated to between c. 1150 and 950 cal. BC. Developed plain wares appear around c. 950 cal. BC, and remain characteristic of the tradition until at least 800 cal. BC. The floruit of decorated wares coincides with part of the radiocarbon calibration curve, which produces widely differing dates, and cannot be dated meaningfully using radiocarbon (Needham 1996, 134–7). They supersede developed plain wares, however, sometime after 800 cal. BC

and they go out of use before the appearance of Saucepan pottery in the 4th or early 3rd century cal. BC. (In Sussex, the broad church comprising Barry Cunliffe’s Park Brow-Caesar’s Camp group has to be fitted in between the two.)

Sussex radiocarbon dates associated with PDR pottery, of which there are about a dozen, echo but are not wholly consistent with the record from southeast England as a whole. Two from Ford and one from Mile Oak associated with plain-ware assemblages cover this early period, but the county, and at Ford the same pit complex, have produced markedly later dates as well (Climping and Ford: Hamilton 2002, 83–4; 2004, 25). Likewise we have good, narrow, early-first-millennium cal. BC dates associated with developed plain-ware assemblages from Selsey and Shinewater Park, and later, broader, ones from Selsey (the same feature but an earlier context), Shinewater, and Yapton (Hamilton 2002, 84; Seager Thomas 2001, 31). For the developed plain-ware assemblages, this can be attributed, at least in part, to a chronology straddling a point in time when fluctuations in the radiocarbon calibration curve make precise dating impossible. But what of the late dates associated with plain-ware assemblages and the inverted dates from Selsey? The obvious explanation is contamination, the obvious culprit, the excavator. The presence



Table 5. (*cont.*)

Site	Period group	<sup>14</sup> C dates	Reference
Ford	PW (mostly)/DEV–DEC	Y	Hamilton 2004
Fore Down, Litlington	PW	N	Unpub.
Gatwick Airport	DEV–DEC	N	Every & Mephram 2005
Glynde Hill	GEN	N	Unpub.
Golf Links Lane (area), Selsey	PW/ DEC	N	White 1934, fig. 2; Seager Thomas 2001, fig. 13; Timby 2005, fig. 6.1–3 & 7
Gosden Road villa, Littlehampton	GEN	N	Unpub.
Harrow Hill	GEN	N	Holleyman 1937, fig. 13
Harting Beacon	DEC	Y	Morris 1978b; Hamilton 1979
Heathy Brow, Eastbourne	PW	N	Hamilton 1982
Highdown	DEV–DEC	N	Hamilton unpub.; Wilson 1940, figs 2–7
Hollingbury	DEC	N	Cunliffe 1966, 112–14; Hamilton 1984
Kingston Buci	PW	N	Curwen & Hawkes 1931, figs 3–23
Kingsham, Chichester	GEN	N	Unpub. (associated with a later EIA assemblage)
Knapp Farm, Bosham	PW	N	Hamilton 1997a
Lancing	LATE	N	Frere 1940, fig. 4a
Lavant	PW	N	Unpub.
Littlehampton Bypass	GEN (probably PW)	N	Unpub.
Merston	GEN	N	Seager Thomas & Hamilton unpub.
Mile Oak	GEN	Y	Hamilton 2002b
Muntham Court	DEC	N	Unpub. (Sue Hamilton pers. comm.)
Newhaven	DEV–DEC	N	Cunliffe 1966, fig. 3.9; Hawkes 1939b
Northbrook College, Worthing	DEV or DEC	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Patcham-Fawcett	DEV–DEC	N	Hamilton unpub.
Plumpton Plain B	PW–DEV	N	Hawkes 1935
Roundstone Lane, Angmering	DEC	N	Seager Thomas unpub.
Rummages Barn, Binderton	?PW–DEV	N	Kenny 1985
Rustington Bypass	PW/ DEC	N	Hamilton 1990
Shinewater Park	DEV	Y	Seager Thomas in prep.
Slonk Hill	DEC	N	Morris 1978a, fig 12.1–16 etc.
Stoke Clump	DEC	N	Cunliffe 1966, 109–13
Testers, Steyning	GEN	N	Hamilton 1988
Thundersbarrow Hill	DEV–DEC	N	Cunliffe 1966, fig. 3.14–15; Hamilton 2003, fig. 6.1 & unpub.
Torberry	DEC	N	Cunliffe 1976, fig 21.98–108
Trundle	DEC	N	Curwen 1929, pls x (left), xi & xiii (bottom)
Varley Halls, Brighton	GEN	Y	Hamilton 1997a
West Beach, Selsey (Coastguard Station and Seaside Field)	DEV	Y	Seager Thomas 1998; 2001, 21–33
West Blatchington	DEV–DEC	N	Norris & Burstow 1950, pls i. 1–9 & ii. 11
Westergate	GEN	N	Hamilton unpub.
Westhampnett	PW	Y	Avery & Mephram 2006, 29 & fig. 16.19–21
Wickbourne, Littlehampton	PW	N	Unpub. & Gilkes 1992, fig. 3
Yapton	DEV	Y	Hamilton 1987

in different contexts within single features, and different features and different feature-types on the same site, of conjoining sherds or sherds in the same minority fabrics on PDR sites across West Sussex suggests, however, that contamination occurred during prehistory, when pre-existing 'rubbish' was reused to fill later features, not during excavation. As Selsey's excavator I find this something of a relief, but as a ceramicist it is worrying, raising the possibility that a number of key Sussex PDR assemblages might be mixed.

### Typology

With the coming of PDR, the range of pottery forms, sizes and fabrics, already extensive in the previous tradition, takes off. What I have illustrated therefore is a small part only of a much larger whole. The earliest group, the plain wares, appears to comprise a range of mostly round-shouldered jars (Figs 8.2, 8.5–6, 8.8, 8.10 & 11.3), convex-sided jars, the mouths of which, although in-turned, appear always to have a circumference greater than that of their bases (Figs 8.1, 8.7, 8.9 & 11.1), and (rare) round or angular shouldered bowls (Fig. 8.4). Most of these are thin-bodied, and many are heavily finger-finished (Figs 8.7–8), and/or have pinched-out bases (Figs 8.7 & 8.10), traits attributed by some to slab building (e.g. Hamilton 2002a, 52). (Many are visibly coil- or ring-built however.) Beyond this the exact parameters of the group are uncertain. Traits to look out for, however, are, in the shouldered jar, a vestigial or developed neck, usually out-turned, with a slightly expanded and perhaps finger-tipped or cabled *rim* (Figs 8.2, 8.6, 8.8, 8.10 & 11.3), in the convex jar, the in-turned or 'hooked' rim (Figs 8.7 & 8.9) and in the shouldered bowl, a delicate out-turned neck or an internally bevelled rim (Fig. 8.4). Decoration on the body of vessels by contrast, although both occasionally present and variable in form, is rare, and hence the name of the group. Sussex PDR plain wares are best represented in assemblages from Beddingham, Ford, Kingston Buci, Littlehampton, Plumpton Plain B and Golf Links Lane Selsey.

The range of forms comprising the next group, the developed plain wares, is more extensive still (Figs 8.11–15 & 9). Types that *may* be present in plain-ware assemblages, such as the hemispherical bowl and the conical plate or *assiette tronconique*, present at Beddingham, are certainly present in developed assemblages (Selsey, Shinewater) (Figs 8.15 & 9.21), and there appears to be a greater

range of bowl shapes and indeed of vessel types overall — cups or tiny bowls (Selsey) (Fig. 9.23), huge fine-ware jars (Selsey) (Fig. 11.9), perforated pans (Selsey) (Fig. 9.19) and round-shouldered bowls with developed rims or necks (Birdham, Shinewater, Yapton etc.) (Figs 8.12–13, 9.17–18 & 9.26–28). It is also my impression — although I hesitate to state it as a rule — that there was a proliferation of shouldered jars with long, unbroken concave shoulders/neck, sometimes with simple rounded rims (Birdham, Selsey), sometimes with expanded rims (Figs 8.14, 9.22 & 10.2). Many vessel *forms* were apparently unchanged, however (Figs 8.11, 9.24–5, etc.) and the group's principal defining characteristic is decoration, now both more common and present, usually in the form of finger-tipping on the *rim*, the *rim edges*, *neck* and *body* of shouldered jars (all developed plain-ware assemblages) (Figs 9.16, 9.20, 9.22, 9.24, 9.29, 11.4–6 & 11.8–9) and recurrent, but still not common on fine wares (Fig 9.30). Applied, fingertip-impressed cordons in the angle between the neck and shoulder of shouldered jars (Beddingham, Selsey, Shinewater and Yapton) (Figs 11.5–6 & Plate 2.14) presage similar, but much more delicate, cordons or 'filets', found in the decorated group (Figs 10.9–11); likewise, bowls with 'bead' rims (Angmering Bypass, Bishopstone, Selsey and Shinewater Park) and linear tooled decoration, placed both above and below an angular shoulder and below the rim (Shinewater Park and Yapton), which have close parallels in later assemblages. Again, however, the exact typological parameters of the group are uncertain.

In the final group, the decorated wares, the key features are a growing repertoire of angular jars, often tripartite, and — of course — the eponymous decoration (Figs 10.6–15 & 11.10–13). In it, the fingering of shouldered jars is added to by slashed/fingernail-impressed decoration (Fig. 10.8 & Plate 2.19), there are new types of moulding, the filets referred to above (Figs 10.9–11 & Plate 2.20), and on some angular jars and bowls, a notched or offset shoulder (Figs 10.7, 10.11–13 & 11.10–12), whilst tooled decoration, linear or otherwise, is both more frequent and present on a wider range of vessel types. All of these features are characteristic of the classic decorated assemblages from the Caburn (individual contexts from which appear to comprise wholly fancy decorated wares), Chanctonbury Ring, Harting Beacon, Hollingbury, Stoke Clump and the Trundle. Also seen is a new type of bowl



with a narrow, round shoulder and a flared neck (two extremes of this form are illustrated in Figs 10.16–17). It is present in decorated assemblages from Roundstone Lane, East Beach Selsey and Slonk Hill, but not in the hilltop assemblages. I suspect that it reflects a final phase of the decorated group, transitional between classic decorated wares, and Barry Cunliffe's Park Brow-Caesar's Camp group (with which it has been indirectly associated) (Cunliffe 1991, 72, 561; Hamilton 1990, 6.1; 2004, 37) and Kent and the continent's La Tène ancienne (in which variants of it also occur) (e.g. Macpherson-Grant 1990). Its identification as such is important because of the form's wider associations locally, which, in addition to decorated wares, continue to include jars that would sit comfortably in plain or developed plain-ware assemblages (Ford, Slonk Hill, West Blatchington) (Figs 10.1–2) and, at Roundstone Lane, a jar with a clay-spattered or 'rusticated' finish known in the aforementioned Kent and continental La Tène ancienne, but not elsewhere in Sussex. On the basis of its fabric, shape and combed body, another trait associated with early La Tène pottery, I would place a small jar in PDR assemblage from Patcham-Fawcett with this group as well (Fig. 10.5).

### Technological features

As the reader will see below, there are more overlaps between PDR fabrics and those of other periods, than there are in any other Bronze Age tradition. The reason for this is that the tradition utilized a wider range of fabric types. In the earliest plain-ware assemblages, coarse fabrics closely resemble their DR predecessors (Beddingham, Climping, Durrington, Lavant), but the range of grades rapidly explodes, swamping these early suites.

Throughout the tradition most pottery was flint-tempered, the inclusions poorly sorted as in DR fabrics, but the average inclusion size smaller, the finest fabrics finer and — importantly — the average inclusion density lower (Plate 2). In addition to this there was an increasing use of clays with a different temper or which incorporated, in addition to or instead of flint, non-flint inclusions (Plate 2.17–21). In West Sussex we see this early on, *possibly* in the plain-ware assemblages from Kingston Buci, which contain a flint and shell-tempered rim sherd (Curwen & Hawkes 1931, fig. 11), Golf Links Lane Selsey, in which similar fabrics were *reported* (the assemblage itself is lost),

and Ford, which contains a fine-ware bowl in a sandy fabric, and *certainly* in the developed plain-ware assemblage from Selsey in which there are sherds in a non-local oolitic fabric, several fabrics incorporating mica and/or granite, and a single rim sherd tempered with greensand. In East Sussex we see it in the developed plain-ware assemblage from Shinewater, in which there is a shelly coarse-ware and a sandy fine-ware (Plate 2.17). More generally, however, non-flint inclusions appear to be late phenomena, associated at their *earliest* with developed plain-ware assemblages. The best indicator of this is a group of (often) sandy and flint-tempered wares with pisolithic iron oxide/glauconitic inclusions first identified by Sue Hamilton (1977; 1980) (Figs 11.10–13; Plates 2.19 & 2.21), common in Sussex east of Worthing. These are absent from better-dated plain and developed plain-ware assemblages locally (Beddingham, Heathy Brow, Kingston Buci, Plumpton Plain, Shinewater), but present in decorated ones (Roundstone Lane, Caburn, Chanctonbury, Slonk Hill, Hollingbury, Newhaven), and they are themselves often shell-tempered or associated with shell tempering (Roundstone Lane, Chanctonbury, Gatwick, Newhaven and Thundersbarrow) (Plates 2.18–19). This phenomenon is mirrored in West Sussex by an increased use of fine sandy fabrics in decorated wares (East Beach Selsey, Harting Beacon, Stoke Clump) and by what looks like a greensand-tempered ware from the Trundle (Plate 2.20).

Thin-bodied vessels occur in medium and even coarse fabrics and thicker jars occur in fine fabrics. Nonetheless, through all three groups, there is a broad correspondence between fabric and vessel type.

PDR pottery is known particularly for its fabrics (Plate 2), its thin bodies (Figs 8–10), its heavily gritted bases (Fig. 11.2) and its rough fingered finishes (Figs 8.7–8, 9.17, 11.1 & 11.3–4) — vessels look quickly but skilfully made. But bowls and jars also occurred, more and more over time, which were very finely finished (Figs 8.11–13, 9.18, 9.21–23, 9.27–8, 9.30, 11.9–13 etc.). Surfaces, interior and exterior sometimes, were burnished (Fig. 11.9), individual vessels were wholly oxidized or wholly unoxidized (Fig. 9.27), indicating that firing was controlled (at a number of sites an oxidized margin, underlying an unoxidized surface, gives a clue to the technique used) (Figs 8.13 & 9.21, Plate 2.15), and in all three groups, not just the 'decorated' one, individual vessels were decorated with fine

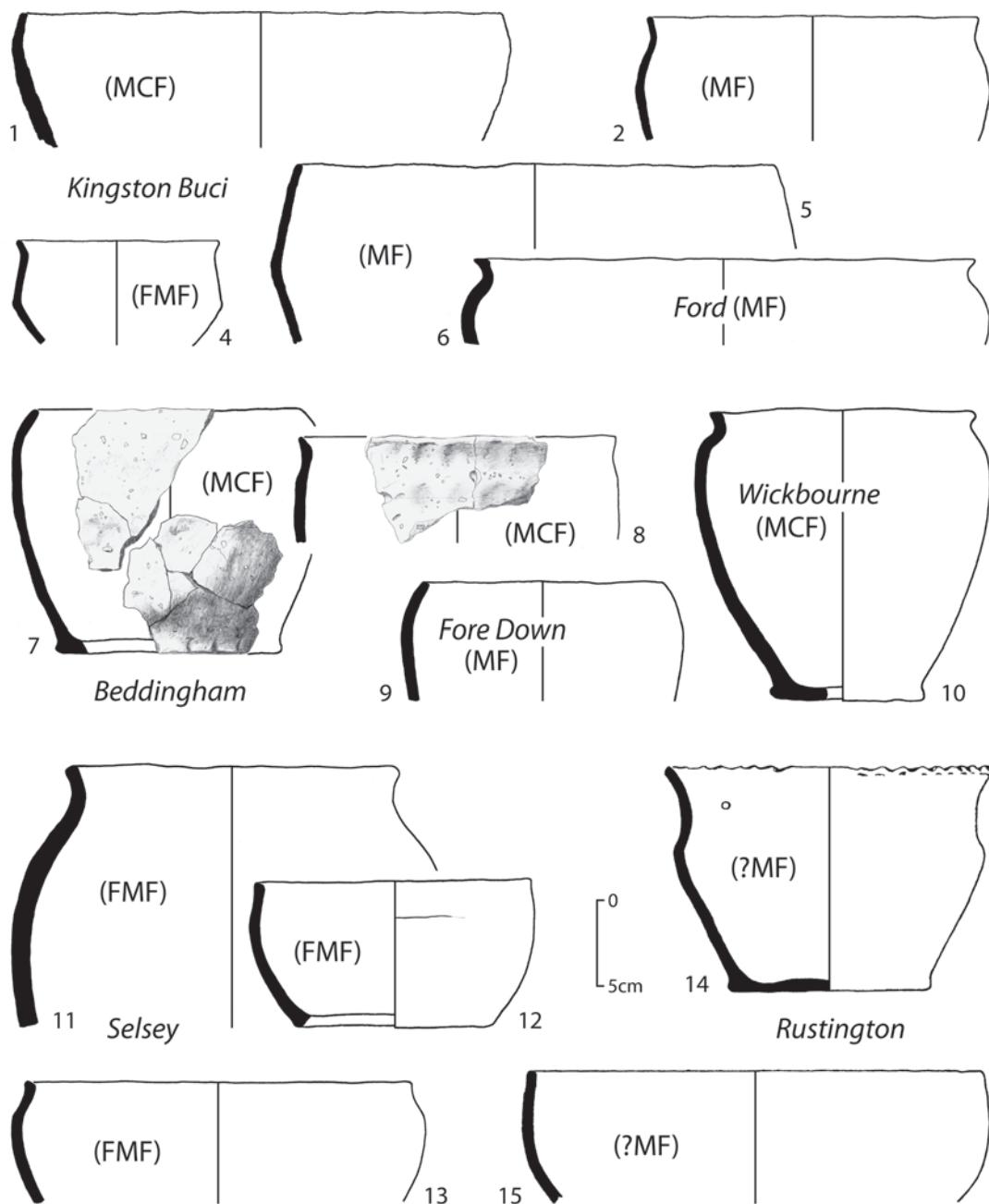


Fig. 8. Post Deverel-Rimbury plain wares from plain-ware (1–10) and developed plain-ware assemblages (11–15). 1–5, after Curwen & Hawkes 1931; 6, after Hamilton 2004; 7–13, previously unpublished (11–13 from a single context within a newly discovered pit); 14–15, after Hamilton 1990. Key: MCF = medium to coarse flint-temper; MF = medium flint-temper; FMF = fine to medium flint-temper.

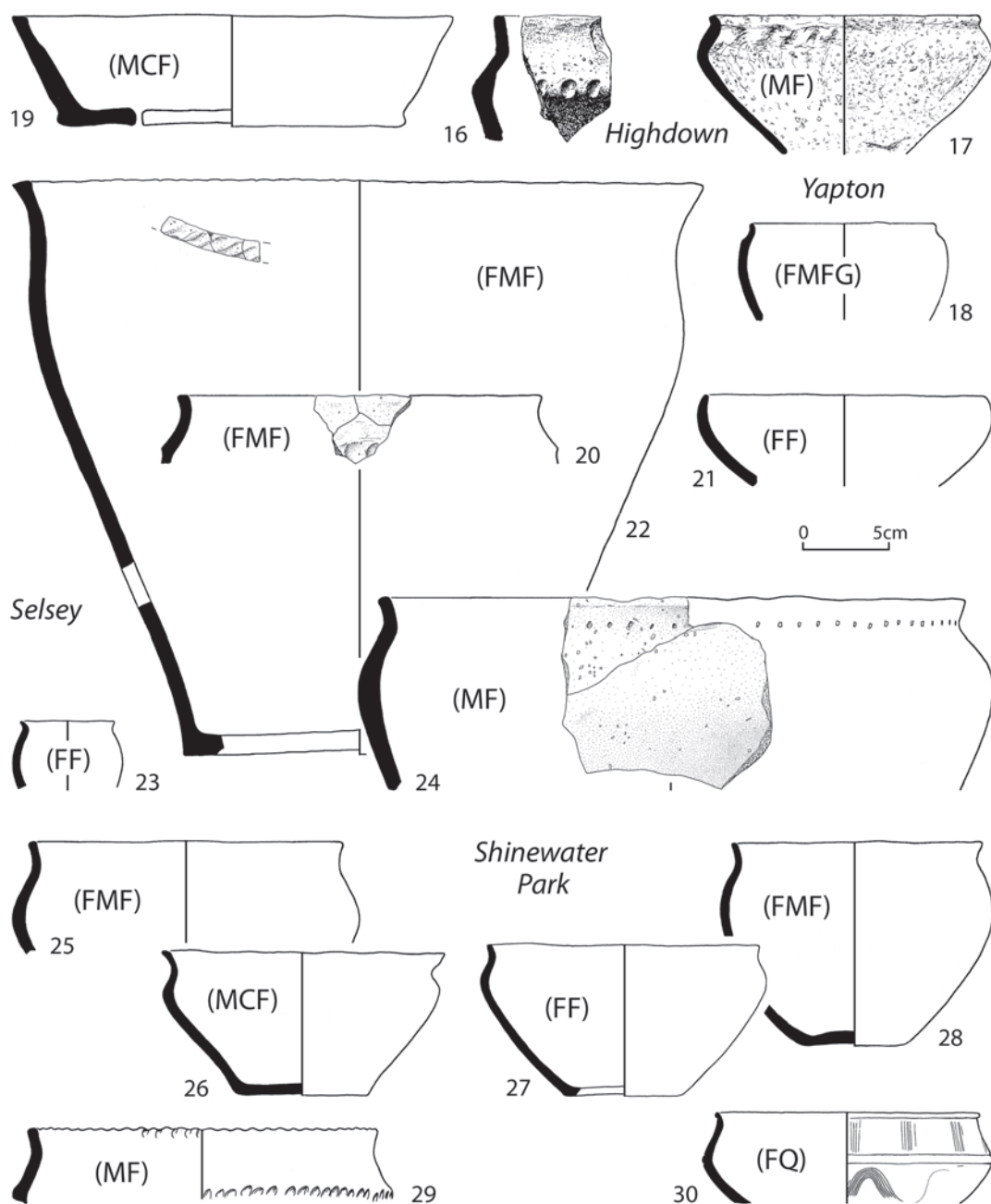


Fig. 9. Post Deverel-Rimbury developed plain wares. 16, after Wilson 1940; 17–18, after Hamilton 1987 (drawing 17: Lysbeth Drewett); 19–24, after Seager Thomas 2001; 25–30, previously unpublished. Key as for Fig. 8 except: FMFG = grog and fine to medium flint-temper; FF = fine flint-temper; FQ = fine quartz sand inclusions.

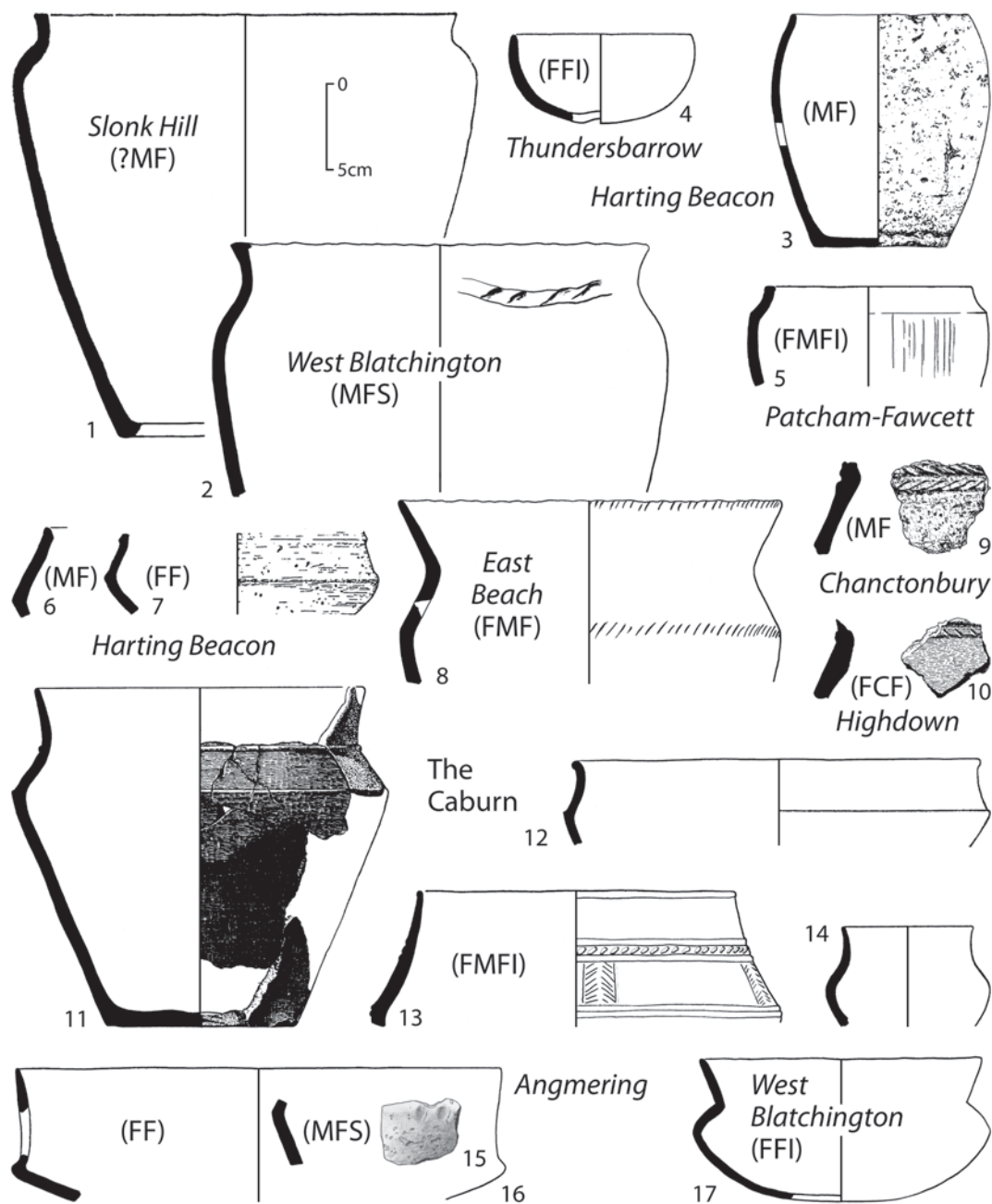


Fig. 10. Late post Deverel-Rimbury. Plain wares associated with decorated assemblages and/ or late bowls (1–3), vessels in pisolithic iron oxide/ glauconitic fabrics associated with developed plain wares and/ or decorated assemblages (4–5), decorated wares (6–15) and late bowls (16–17). 1, after Morris 1978a; 2 & 17, after Norris & Burstow 1950; 3 & 6, after Hamilton 1979; 4, after Hamilton 2003; 5, 13 & 15–16, previously unpublished; 7, after Morris 1978b; 8, after Seager Thomas 2001; 9, after Hamilton 1980; 10, after Wilson 1940; 11 & 14, after Hawkes 1939a; 12, after Cunliffe 1966. Key as for Figs 8 & 9 except: FFI = fine flint-temper with pisolithic iron oxide/ glauconite inclusions; MFS = shell and medium flint-temper; FMFI = fine to medium flint-temper with pisolithic iron oxide/ glauconite inclusions; FCF = fine to coarse flint-temper.



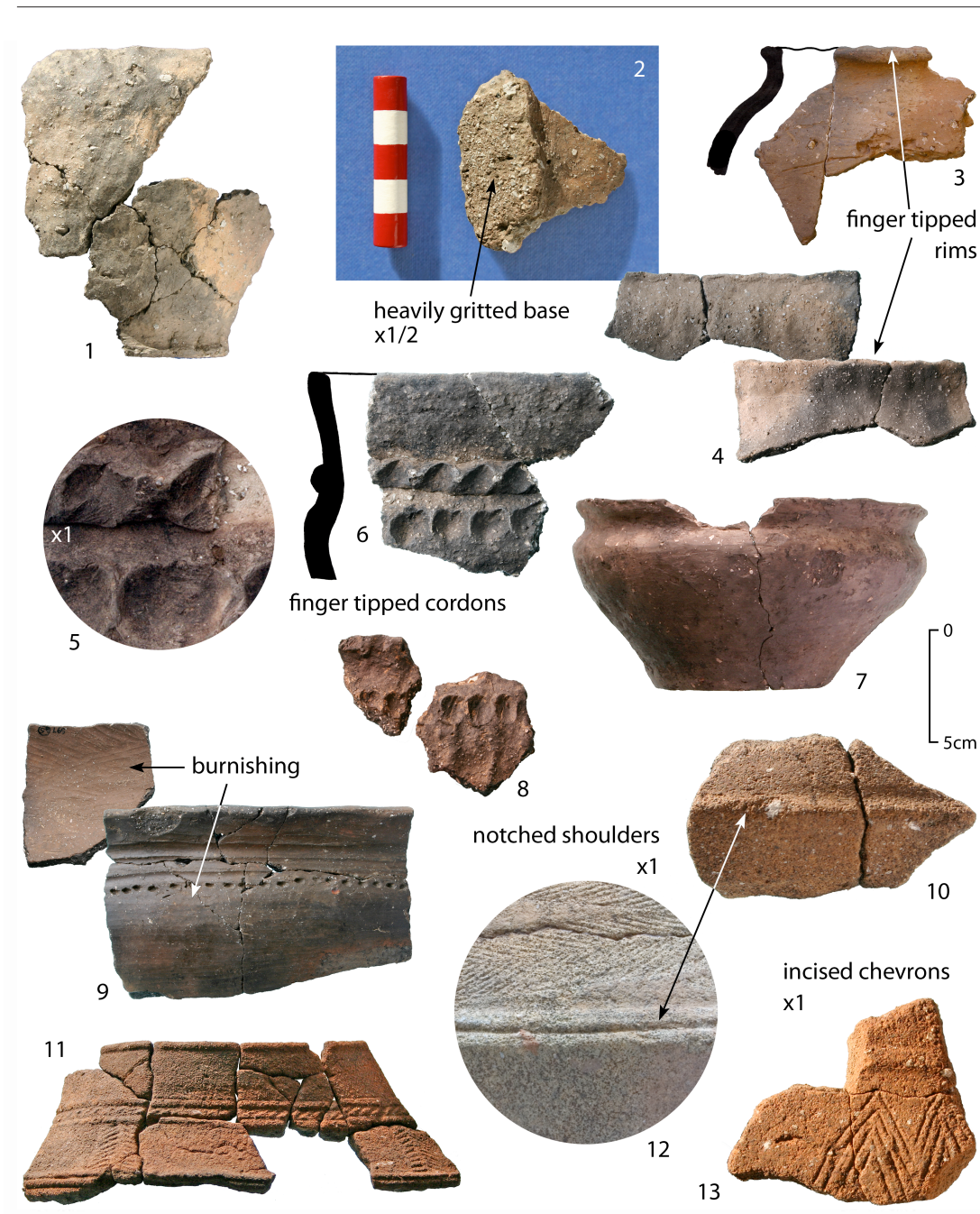


Fig. 11. Post Deverel-Rimbury. 1 & 2, Beddingham Roman Villa; 3, Wickbourne; 4–7, Shinewater Park; 8–9, Selsey (8 from same feature as fig. 8.11–13); 10–13, the Caburn (photos: author, 3 & 12 with permission of Barbican House & Littlehampton Museum).

linear patterns. The ethos was the same as for DR pottery but the level of technical proficiency in potting had moved on.

### Research issues

The PDR tradition had, after Collared Urns, the widest distribution of the groups discussed here, occurring across southern Britain and on the continent. Within this broad area there are discrete style zones, as well as local differences in fabric, but there is little doubt that the tradition as a whole belongs to a broad cultural continuum, the associations of which include, in addition to pottery, similar settlement and other artefact types. Recent pottery research in this area has focused on the nature of these connections and their implications for our understanding of site resource strategies. In view of the close similarity between continental and British assemblages (particularly those comprising plain and developed plain wares) (e.g. Blancquaert 2000; Demoule & Illet 1982), and between different British assemblages, we can now discount the idea that the presence of *assiettes tronconiques* and other 'foreign' types reflect direct non-local influence, but there is little doubt that pottery, or raw clay at least, was both moving about within the county and entering it from outside. Locally the earliest evidence for the movement of PDR pottery is Selsey's oolitic ware, certainly a West Country import, but the principal indicator is the much later proliferation of Sue Hamilton's pisolithic iron oxide/glaucanitic wares and their associated fabrics. It is not yet certain whether this represents actual trade (I believe it does) or a broadening of resource territories from which raw materials were obtained, but, either way, it represents an increased investment in pottery-making which can hardly have occurred without some degree of pottery specialization, a development closely paralleled outside the county during the same period (Morris 1994; Seager Thomas 2001, 39).

Of interest too is how and where pottery was used. With the tradition, it assumed a wider range of functions and became a more widely-used commodity (Barrett 1980, 303). As such it is a highly useful interpretative tool. Sue Hamilton has observed, for example, different proportions of fine-ware bowls in the decorated assemblages from Harting Beacon (44%) and Chanctonbury (10%) (Hamilton & Manley 1997, 100), whilst in early Coastal Plain assemblages (Climping, Durrington,

Ford, Knapp Farm) and at Beddingham, in East Sussex, they are hardly represented at all. I interpret this chronologically. Over time, the importance of pottery in eating and drinking increased. (In this scenario the Chanctonbury assemblage as a whole would have to be earlier than that from Harting Beacon or incorporate a significant earlier component.) But on the basis of the available evidence, it is equally likely that the Beacon had a different role, for example as some kind of central meeting and eating-place.

Related to this is the question of 'contamination' referred to above. To my knowledge there are at least four West Sussex sites on which conjoining sherds or sherds in the same rare fabric suites occur in different features (Birdham, Selsey, Knapp Farm and Yapton). Sue Hamilton, who first observed this phenomenon, interpreted it in terms of site closure. 'The large scale middening of material', she writes, 'and the subsequent levelling of sites by clearing midden material into pits and ditches has increasingly been recognized as a Late Bronze Age [PDR] phenomenon in southern England' (2004, 37; see also 1987, 53; 1997, 79). I do not quite accept this. The source of the conjoining sherds need not be an upstanding midden, it could be another backfilled feature, and I see no reason at all to assume that large numbers of features were backfilled at the same time — on the contrary: stratigraphic evidence from these sites shows that many of the pits on them intercut. But these distributions are real and whether her interpretation is correct or not, their implications for the compositional and chronological integrity of individual context and feature assemblages are considerable. And as we have seen, within the context of Bronze Age ritual as we currently understand it, the idea of a ritual component in the backfilling of at least some of these features cannot be discounted. So far no Sussex PDR site has yielded convincing evidence for ritual involving the deliberate 'placing' of pottery, except for Worthing's '40 acres brick field' where a pot of ambiguous form famously contained a typical Late Bronze Age founder's hoard, but it is surely coming. During this period we cannot take any pottery distribution at face value.

A final unknown is how long PDR lasted. Since John Barrett's (1980) resolution of it as a Bronze Age tradition, most PDR assemblages have been automatically attributed to this

period, but it is clear that fabrics and some forms continue indistinguishably into the Iron Age. The implication is that some of our dating at least is wrong. Research into the pottery of this transitional period should be considered a priority.

#### ENVOI

I have on my ceramic conscience one significant published misidentification, a group of a dozen or so Late Iron Age sherds from Ford Aerodrome, attributed by me without caveats to the Late Bronze Age (Place 2004, 1). As with most such misidentifications locally, my problem was the recurrent use of flint for tempering. In West Sussex flint tempering occurs in Neolithic, later Bronze Age and Iron Age pottery, and in East Sussex, in Neolithic, later Bronze Age and Early Iron Age pottery. Where whole assemblages are involved this may not be a problem. Assemblages belonging to the DR tradition can, for example, usually be distinguished from those belonging to the PDR tradition by the number and range of fabrics present and by sherd thickness; whilst identically tempered PDR and Saucepan pottery, a problem encountered in mixed West Sussex assemblages such as those from Carne's Seat and Lavant, can be distinguished by their dominant finish, fingered in PDR pottery and burnished in Saucepan pottery. There are also obvious typological differences.

The real problem periods are the Neolithic and, as I learned to my embarrassment, the Late Iron Age. During both, a wide range of fabric type, surface finish and vessel thickness were employed, the coarser end of the Neolithic repertoire overlapping with DR coarse wares (Lavant again), the finer end with DR fine wares and PDR medium and fine wares; the Late Iron Age repertoire with PDR coarse, medium and fine to medium wares (the Ford sherds). Distinguishing these can be a nightmare. Neolithic sherds are often softer than PDR ones, whilst their fabrics may be laminated, an effect produced when clay is thinned by beating. Potters of different periods sometimes used clays with different, or different proportions of, *natural* inclusions such as quartz sand and iron oxides. Overall Ford's Iron Age potters for example used sandier clays than its PDR potters. These can be and are studied but the subtlety and time required is beyond most specialists. Quite large groups

of flint-tempered wares therefore may be very imprecisely dated.

The reader may also have problems with some minority PDR fabrics. Selsey's oolitic fabric could possibly pass for Middle Iron Age, and Ford and Shinewater's fine sandy fabrics for Late Iron Age, but both are so rare it is hardly worth worrying about. More difficult are East Sussex's shell and pisolithic/glaucanitic wares, which, when flint-free or only very sparsely flint-tempered, can be indistinguishable from similar East Sussex fabrics used during the Middle Iron Age (Seager Thomas 2005, table 7), whilst the use of shell and flint in the same fabric is a characteristic of both Neolithic and Saxon traditions locally. No doubt potters during all four periods were drawing upon the same clay sources.

Finally, a word of warning. Whereas pottery traditions and fabrics may display a considerable degree of continuity over a wide area, for the Bronze Age in particular there *are* differences. To paraphrase Sue Hamilton, 'Sussex is not Wessex', nor Kent, nor Greater London, nor Easter Island. Importing knowledge of one area into another can benefit local studies interpretatively, and it is wonderful for the commercial sector's economies of scale, but if we do it, we have to do it with caution.

Take the Kent record. In terms of identification you would expect the pottery of Kent and Sussex to be similar — next door to one another, the same traditions, similar geologies, lots of flint tempering etc. But in fact there are many potentially misleading differences. DR pottery in northwest Kent is sometimes heavily grog-tempered: superficially it can look like Collared Urn, and *vice versa*. The county's PDR tradition is notable for a lack of plain-ware assemblages, attributed either to settlement continuity, and the concomitant mixing of plain and developed wares, or an early flourish in decoration (Hamilton & Seager Thomas 2005). Pottery forms, which in Sussex end with the PDR tradition continue into the Middle Iron Age, carried by its continental La Tène ancienne and La Tène I traditions. Lastly, glaucanitic fabrics do not appear with the PDR tradition, as they do in Sussex, but during the later Iron Age. (The same is true in Greater London.) Interpretatively the Kent Bronze Age koine is not substantively different from that of Sussex, but were knowledge of it to be applied *ad hoc* to the identification of Sussex assemblages, it would be disastrous.

*Contra* SEAGER THOMAS 2008

As I researched this paper, trawling again through the counties' museums and my own archive, I encountered dozens of sites, hundreds of pots and thousands of sherds that I did not know about or had forgotten existed. Many of these added little or nothing to what I had planned to say but others did, some of them altering it significantly, and I was reminded that there is always more to know and to say about prehistoric pottery. My words therefore are in no sense final, rather, they are an interim statement — there will be more sites, and these will impact upon what I have said, one way or another. I was also reminded that ceramicists get their facts as well as their interpretations wrong. No doubt this is inevitable, we deal with so many minutiae, but the specialist's unhappy lot is no comfort when you learn that her or his shining interpretative edifice is based upon the careless identification of sand as rock. To the extent that I too am guilty of this — not too much I hope — I apologize. Finally it was impressed upon me that to excavate a site and not to publish it is, in the case of the commercial sector which is paid

to *save* archaeology, fraudulent, and in the case of research archaeology, vandalism, since we cannot count upon any assemblage remaining accessible at all times and intact indefinitely. I exhort the reader therefore: get that report out! Even the most tendentious publication disseminates ideas, helps us correct our mistakes, moves the discipline along, whilst the best — not mine, but maybe the reader's — will make enormous strides. I look forward eagerly to the first reference 'Seager Thomas 2008' or, better still, '*contra* Seager Thomas 2008'.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> My use of colloquial English in this article and in particular my use of the first person, places me on one side of 'an academic debate on the role of personal experience in the reporting of archaeological knowledge — something that is considered inappropriate in the reports of "Contract Archaeology", which have standardized, de-personalized formats and aim to appear "scientific" and "professional" and thereby exclude personal perspectives' (Sue Hamilton pers.comm.). It was never my intention to become involved in this debate but since there is one, and since I find myself on one side rather than another, I will explain my position.

I use colloquial English because I believe it to be

more readable than academic English. Why would anybody make something interesting boring? Or something straightforward complicated? (Yes, I *know* this is bad grammar.) As far as I am concerned there is enough boring or complicated archaeology already without me adding to it (or adding to it more than I have to). As for the first person, I use 'I' to distinguish my ideas from those of others. If an idea is mine, I believe it should be judged according to what I know or what I don't know. For me to say that something 'appears to be so', when in fact it merely 'appears to me to be so', would be to mislead the reader.

<sup>2</sup> Owing to the poor firing of the clay, soil development may continue *through* sherds, resulting in the deposition of unfired clay and silt layers (cutans) within them.

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